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Battle of brawn

The World's Strongest Man competition is being held this week in Sanya, a seaside resort in Hainan Province, with the final tomorrow. Ten athletes from six countries have come through various tests of strength, including deadlifting a car.

Xinhua Photo

Ban on private cars at Olympic venues

By Chen Shasha

Private cars are to be banned from Olympic sporting venues in 2008, according to Liu Xiaoming, of the Beijing Transportation Committee.

Liu's announcement follows a meeting of city officials and experts last weekend, where possible measures to avoid traffic problems during the upcoming Games were discussed. Liu Xiaoming said Beijing plans to take an approach similar to that used in previous host cities Athens and Atlanta, prohibiting private cars from traveling to Olympic sporting venues. Parking lots near the venues will not accept private cars during sporting events.

Games organizers will instead lay on free buses for spectators, officials, journalists and volunteers, according to Yu Chunquan, of the Beijing Municipal Traffic Management Bureau. He said that more than seven million free travel tickets for spectators will be available to various events and venues during

the games. The free travel service will be staffed by up to 180,000 transport workers and volunteers.

As well as limiting private car access to sports venues, the Traffic Management Bureau says it will set aside some 210 kilometers of traffic lanes for the exclusive use of Olympic traffic, to guarantee that government officials, athletes and referees arrive at their destinations on time.

Beijing residents largely support the ban on private vehicle use. "I totally agree with the measure. The increasing number of private cars has caused a lot of problems. I hope more people ride their bicycles to Olympic events," said Joyce Du, a bank worker who is not a car owner. Chen Hui, who runs a housing company and owns two cars, says she will be complying with the traffic restrictions. "Although it won't solve the underlying traffic problems, it seems the best way to deal with the issue during the games in 2008," she said.

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Panda bites man, man bites panda

By Han Manman

A giant panda bit a drunken visitor to Beijing Zoo on Tuesday after he jumped into its enclosure. The man, whose right leg was seriously injured in the attack, then bit the panda back.

Zhang Xinyan, 29, a traveler from Henan province came to Beijing to visit the zoo. According to the *Beijing Morning Post*, he drank four jugs of beer at a restaurant near the zoo before visiting the panda. He was attacked when he jumped over a fence to try to

shake the panda's paw. Tourists yelled for a zookeeper, who got the panda under control by spraying it with water.

Zhang said he never expected to be attacked by the panda. Speaking from the People's Hospital of Peking University, Zhang described the wound to his leg. "My right leg is badly cut but I don't feel the pain anymore."

"I bit the panda on its back, but its fur was too thick to give it a proper gnawing," said Zhang as he recalled how he fainted

after being dragged out of the panda's pit. Doctors at Renmin Hospital say the five by four centimeter wound to Wang's right leg is the worst animal bite they have treated. "It's also the first time I've treated a panda bite," said Zhang's doctor. "He's lucky that the bite didn't go through to the bone."

Ye Mingxia, a spokeswoman for Beijing Zoo, confirmed the incident happened but would not give any further details. She said the panda was "healthy". "The

panda suffered quite a bit of shock after the incident," Ye said.

It is not the first time a giant panda had attacked an intruder at the zoo. In 2004 a student jumped into the enclosure for a closer look and was bitten on the foot by a panda.

"Giant pandas tend to become vicious under three circumstances: when they're on heat, during a sudden change in surroundings, or when defending territory," a zoologist told the *Beijing Morning Post*.

Additional train lines for Golden Week

By Gan Tian

The Beijing Railway Bureau has published its transport plan for the 'Golden Week' holiday period between October 1st and 7th with some important changes.

Transport chiefs estimate that close to five million travelers will take trains either from or through Beijing over the holiday period. For this reason, the National Railway Bureau will open an additional 33 temporary lines in Beijing, the majority to famous tourist cities like Shanghai, Zhangjiajie, Xi'an and Qingdao.

Beijing North and South Stations will be under construction over the holiday period so trains from Beijing to Badaling Great Wall and Laiyuan will be cancelled. Travelers who want to visit those sections of the Great Wall will have to travel by bus.

Train tickets will be on sale 24-hours a day and can also be booked over the phone or on the Internet. Telephone 95105105 between 9am and 6pm five to days ahead of your departure date, Beijing Railway Station on 51019999 or Beijing West Railway Station on 51826273. Alternatively, go to www.houchepiao.com.

Beijing Triathlon World Cup kicks off tomorrow

By Gan Tian

The 2006 OSIM Beijing Triathlon World Cup will begin at the Shisan-Ling Power Station, in Changping tomorrow morning (Saturday). As Beijing's last international sports event in 2006, the triathlon will be the city's last chance to rehearse for the Beijing 2008 Olympics before next year.

More than 500 athletes, including 150 overseas sportsmen and women, are expected to take part in the event. The total prize money is \$80,000, attracting lots of students and citizens to enroll for the competition.

The world cup is seen as a preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympics: the 2008 race line is to be used in tomorrow's competition for the first time, with an area of 16,700 square meters. The watching area can hold an audience of 3,000 which will increase to 10,000 in 2008.

Li Jian, the committee's press spokesman, told *Beijing Today*, "all of our members are happy with the work we have done. Athletes who have arrived are enjoying the good facilities here. We believe this triathlon is an eye-catching event and we also believe it will be a good practice run before the Olympics."

Chan's the man



Impoverished students from minority nationalities view the flag-raising ceremony with film star Jacky Chan at Tian'anmen Square yesterday morning. The 15 students, from Yunnan province, are beneficiaries of his *The Wing of Angel* program to assist disadvantaged students. CFP Photo

Drivers urged – ditch your car for the day

By Chu Meng

This Saturday is World Car-free Day (WCFD) and drivers are being urged to ditch their cars for the day to do their bit for the environment. A cross-city cycle ride will also be held, with cyclists starting the journey from the west gate of Chaoyang Park on Saturday morning.

World Wildlife China, Global Village of Beijing and Friends of the Nature, three of the country's biggest NGOs dedicated to the promotion of sustainable development and an environmentally friendly lifestyle, all called on

people to cycle, walk or use public transport on World Car-Free Day.

"We have distributed more than 1,500 posters around Beijing," said Hu Huizhe, from Friends of Nature. "A gallery exhibition on the theme of World Car-Free Day will open on Friday. We hope that as many people as possible will take part in the cross-city bicycle ride. They will help to highlight the importance of the day and contribute to urban environmental protection."

"With no feedback from the Beijing Traffic Management

Bureau, it is hard to say whether there will be fewer cars on the roads," Hu said. "But we have had people calling our office to say they wouldn't start their engines today."

Zhang Peng, a BP employee in Beijing who drives more than 30 kilometers every day between his home and office, was one supporter of the event. "It's the first time I've decided to go to work by bus and I think it's almost as convenient as driving," he said. "I will be using public transport more often and will invite my colleagues to join the movement."

UNESCO – Beijing first capital with 'World Geopark'

By Huang Daohen

Beijing and Hebei province have successfully received the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) official approval for their joint application for the 'China Fangshan World Geological Park'.

The application was approved

at the Second International Conference on Geoparks held in Belfast, Britain, on September 18. Beijing therefore becomes the first capital with an officially recognized world geological park.

The park, characterized by karst rock formations, includes Beijing's Shidu scenic spot, Shihuadong in

Fangshan and Yesanpo in Baoding, Hebei Province, all of which are national geological parks that showcase their evolution and history. Two sites are also home to cultural relics of ancient human settlements – Zhoukoudian is the site where Peking Man was discovered and Beibian Bridge was where

the famous wise man fossils were unearthed.

Experts from the China Geological Association said the success of the application would help to increase tourism to the north of China and create a scientific base for the preservation of the country's geological heritage.

Snail victims finally get compensation

By Qiu Jiaoning

Beijing Shuguo Yanyi Restaurant has paid out 338,000 yuan in compensation to 27 snail victims after the restaurant's half-cooked Amazonian snails led to 95 people contracting meningitis, its owners announced on Wednesday.

Chen Youling, deputy manager of Shuguo Yanyi Restaurant said that they would eventually pay out around 1.5 million yuan in compensation to all the snail victims, as the current figure does not include compensation for the victim's loss of income and emo-

tional harm.

Chen said that many hospitals had misdiagnosed patients as having common colds rather than meningitis and this had added to the compensation bill.

A total of 140 people were infected as a result of the half-

cooked snails. Most of the victims in Beijing have been discharged from hospital but 10 are continuing to be treated at hospital and are expected to be discharged by October 1, said Dr Yin Chenghong from Beijing Friendship Hospital's tropical disease institute.

Celebration weekend for tourism festival

By Jackie Zhang

Dozens of performances and exhibitions put on by groups from all over the world will take place in Beijing this weekend for the Ninth Beijing International Cultural Tourism Festival.

The Festival kicks off today in Fenglian Plaza, Chaoyang District. The festival's centerpiece will be the parade to be held on Sunday.

The Festival will last until next Monday. Over the four days, people from 51 countries across the world will take part in the celebration events.

Major events:

Parade on September 24, 9 am to 11 am

Venue: Chaowai Street

The main activity, the parade, will take place on Sunday. The marching will start from the east Second Ring Road and end at the south gate of the Workers' Stadium. 2,500 people including, 33 performance groups from 23 countries and groups from eight provinces in China, will take part in the parade.

Photo exhibition from September 22 to 26

Venue: Fenglian Plaza, Chaoyang District

International tourism consultancy exhibition from September 22 to 24

Venue: Fenglian Plaza, Chaoyang District

Tap dance on September 24, 7 pm to 9 pm

Venue: Kuntai Cultural Plaza and Shibaidian Village in Chaoyang District, Shijingshan Park in Shijingshan District

Imperial pleasure garden to be rebuilt

By Jiang Xubo

A private company this week announced plans to recreate the Yuanmingyuan (the Garden of Perfection and Light), once the playground of the Qing imperial court, in southeastern China's Zhejiang province.

"We have finished a draft design. The plan has gone through the legal approval process and work on the project is expected to begin soon," said Xu Wenrong,

president of Hengdian Group, the Zhejiang-based company behind the project.

The rebuilt palace site covers an area of 350 hectares. The project will cost some 20 billion yuan (US\$2.5 billion), and is expected to take five years to complete.

The design has been based on old paintings, documents and surveys of ruins of the Summer Palace. Drafting it has taken 15 years, including collecting source

material and discussing feasibility, according to Xu.

"Let the ruins in Beijing stand as a witness to what happened in 1860, and the reborn Yuanmingyuan in Hengdian re-create our brilliant achievements before that year," added Xu, who is also general director of the project.

However, scholars have questioned the value of the project.

"The remaining ruins are a witness of history," said Ruan Yisan,

professor of history at Shanghai's Tongji University. "Any attempt to rebuild the garden will only be an awkward imitation."

Yuanmingyuan was built in 1709 and burnt to the ground in 1860 by French and British troops.

The Hengdian Group currently owns several commercial movie and TV studios, where historical sets include an imitation Forbidden City.

Home schooling sparks custody battle

By Annie Wei

A custody battle sparked by differences over what kind of education is best for an eight-year-old boy has ended up in court. Hou Hongru is a bright boy, and shows stronger English and Chinese abilities than most other children of his age, achieved under a home schooling education provided by his father.

This has not satisfied Hou's mother, Ms Wang, who is now divorced from the boy's father. She has sued for custody on the grounds that her ex-husband is not providing a legally compulsory education to their son.

This week, the People's Court in Beijing's Shijingshan rejected Wang's custody claim. In their judgment, they said Hou showed outstanding educational achievements and was in a healthy psychological and physical state.

Hou has been home schooled since June 2004. According to his father, the boy had behavioral problems at school. Other students' parents had written to his then teachers saying that they did not want Hou to be in the same class as their own children. This led Hou's father to keep the boy at home and teach him himself.

After a year and a half of home schooling, Hou has read Western classics like Aesop's *Fables* and completed English courses to a level equivalent to college students. The boy also reads Chinese classics.

Hou's father believes that formal education is inferior to home schooling, as schools cannot tailor the education they provide to suit different children. "Hou can easily read 100 pages of a Chinese book now, but how many other kids at his age from the school can do the same thing?" asked his father.

The court's judgment requires that the father should help Hou go back to school and complete his compulsory education. As an eight-year-old, Hou should be in second grade. The Shijingshan Yinhe Primary School gave Hou a set of teaching materials for grade four. Apart from the math, Hou finished reading the books within half a day, the father said.



Old factories are serving as exhibition spaces.

Photo by Zhang Meng

Tourist town hosts international photography festival

By Annie Wei

Today sees the end of the week-long sixth China Pingyao International Photography Festival (PIP) in Pingyao, the well-known tourist spot in western China's Shanxi province.

Pingyao is already famed for its well-preserved classic architecture and city walls, and it now has a growing reputation among photography lovers too.

Supported by the national Ministry of Culture and Shanxi's provincial government, the 2006 PIP took the theme of 'diversity and harmony'. More

than 1,600 photographers from 41 countries, including the US, France, Germany, Greece and Japan, brought more than 10,000 works to the festival.

All exhibitions this year were held indoors. Individual displays had themes including a retrospective on the thirtieth anniversary of the Contact Press Images agency, photographs from Chinese and foreign art schools, pictures on an Olympic theme, old pictures of Shanxi merchants, and displays by individual photographers.

Zhang Guotian, the main

festival organizer, said that the 2006 PIP showed the diversity of photographic art forms, and had attracted more visitors than previous years. He identified the presentation of 350 works by Robert Pledge, co-founder and director of Contact Press Images, as one of the festival highlights.

Zheng Meng, a photographer from Tianjin, said the exhibition was very exciting. "You can see a lot of excellent works and photographers from different countries. The atmosphere is very good."

Fake Yale doctor gets 13 years for fraud

By Annie Wei

A former senior publishing executive who falsely claimed to have a doctorate in computing from Yale was sentenced 13 years in jail this week for embezzling almost 600,000 yuan.

Shen Zhenlin, formerly vice-president of Beijing Hope Publishing, was born to a farming family in Zhejiang province. He emigrated illegally to the US at the age of 19, where with the help of other Chinese emigrants in New Haven, he found temporary employment as a cleaner on the campus of the city's prestigious Yale University. In his time there, he managed to attend some computer classes and improved his English language skills.

In 1999, Shen got to know a

Ms Qin, who was president of Beijing Hope Publishing house, via the Internet. Shen told Qin that he was a Chinese American whose parents owned a boat building company. He claimed he had graduated from Beijing Normal University before earning a doctorate in computing from Yale. Shen also claimed that he had published many articles in international journals. Not long after, Shen was invited back to China by Qin, where he began working for Hope Publishing.

Within two years, Shen was promoted to vice-president. However, his rapid promotion, and claims to have a doctorate and US citizenship, aroused the suspicion of colleagues at the publishing house. In May 2002, a letter

was sent to a judicial department revealing Shen's real identity.

After the investigation that followed the letter, Shen admitted he had fabricated much of his past. He left the publishing house in June 2002. An audit commissioned by his former employers found that 98 books that Shen edited had been downloaded from the Internet, and infringed intellectual property rights. Some 600,000 yuan, supposedly fees for authors of these books, had ended up in Shen's own pocket.

Ms Qin resigned because she was the one who recommended Shen. Hope Publishing also reported the case to the police. In January this year, Shen was arrested as he passed through Beijing's Capital Airport.

Play shows life of urban 'house slaves'

By He Jianwei

A theater director has asked Internet users to help choose a title for his play about the lives of home-owners struggling to make ends meet in one of Beijing's new housing developments. The performance will run at the Mini Theater at Beijing People's Art Theater from November 8 to 26.

The opportunity to suggest a name for the play ended September 17.

"We finally decided to call the play 'D-style life', because there are many words in English that start with 'd' that are relevant, such as 'double', 'doubtful', 'dog', 'dove', 'drama', 'dread', 'dream', 'danger', and 'delicate'. We think 'd' shows the life of what are called 'house slaves' - people who are slaves to the cost of buying a house in Beijing - very well," said Wu Ran, director of the play and also a resident of the housing development the piece features.

The play takes its inspiration from the daily life in Jindigelin Town in the Yi Zhuang Community. "Most of us are fighting for our dreams and fighting for our houses in Beijing. We want to show how we live by showing our community's life," said Wu.

The 'house slave' is a common phenomenon in contemporary Chinese urban life. "I don't believe we should feel sorry for 'house slaves'. I think people who are fighting for a better life deserve praise," said Wu.

Brief news

Water level in Three Gorges Reservoir to rise again

The second phase of water storage at the Three Gorges Reservoir began Wednesday. Water levels are expected to rise to 156 meters in October, up from the present 135 meters, according to Li Yong'an, general manager of the China Yangtze River Three Gorges Project Development Corporation.

Crackdown on piracy

Chinese authorities have destroyed nearly 13 million pirated CDs, DVDs and computer software disks, confiscated in a nationwide 100-day intensive crackdown campaign on piracy launched in July, according to the Ministry of Public Security.

Insurance revenue

China's insurers garnered premiums worth over 380 billion yuan (US\$48 billion) in the first eight months of this year, up nearly 14 percent on the same period last year, according to the state's Insurance Regulatory Commission.

Cross-straits trade up

Trade between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan earned over US\$68 billion in the first eight months of this year, up nearly 22 percent from a year earlier, said Tang Wei, an official of the Commerce Ministry, who is in charge of trade affairs between the mainland and Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. (By Jiang Xubo)



The Beijing Female Prison

Photo by Huang Daohen

A 'school' without freedom

A glimpse of life inside Beijing Female Prison

By Huang Daohen

Unshackled, lightly made-up, a female inmate talks and moves freely around a room, but she is very busy editing a paper, holding a pile of freshly printed newspapers. Around her, six other inmates type away conscientiously on their computers.

Cui Qin, a 43-year-old woman serving a life sentence for corruption, is the editor. She never imagined she would serve as one of the staff editing the prison paper, *New Flight*, which is published twice a month.

Life in the women's prison, in most people's eyes, is somewhat mysterious, or rather, horrible. However, a female inmates' solo art exhibition held in early this September, caught the public's attention and peeled away the mystery of China's prison long-standing. In these inmates' eyes, life is simple and calm in prison. Some even find fun and hope there, starting a new life.

The Beijing Female Prison, founded in October 1999, is the only place for the city to imprison adult female criminals. The prison is located in Daxing County, a place of great beauty. If not for the high walls and electrified fence, it might be mistaken for a villa area.

More than 900 women who have been sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve, life-imprisonment and shorter sentences, live here. Of the 900 inmates, 41 percent were imprisoned for committing financial offenses, including fraud, embezzlement and bribery, just like Cui. Twenty-five percent committed violent crimes, such as homicide and robbery, 7.9 percent committed drug trafficking. The rest of the inmates are in for a wide array of offenses, from picking pockets to stealing bicycles. And 24.8 percent graduated from university or college.

Management

"We are now in the period of humanization reform, which aims to weaken the prison's function as an institute of punishment while strengthening its role as an agent of rehabilitation and ensuring pris-



Inmates at work.

oners' rights," said Liu Rui, director of the 9th division.

The prison has been practicing an assessment method of points accumulation for a long time. Prizes are given according to the scores, and the principle of openness, justice and fairness has been fully manifested within the walls. According to the assessment, 22 inmates with good performance scores were permitted to go home and have family reunions last Spring Festival.

According to Liu, the prison has advanced medical facilities and qualified medical staff, so that every inmate receives a regular physical examination and has her own medical record. They can cope with the common cold, and they made sure one woman with cancer was cared for to the best of their abilities.

In her opinion, giving inmates vocational training is one of most important issues, because when they are released, they will be capable of making a life and serving society. Therefore, the prison offers training classes in computer technology, flower arranging, hair dressing, electrical engineering and wood sculpture.

The prison has also opened literacy classes and classes in primary and junior secondary education. Inmates with a senior secondary education or higher are encouraged to participate in the examinations for entry to institutions of higher learning.

"Prisoners should pay for their

wrongdoings, but this does not mean that they are not human or that they are inferior to others. Their dignity should be respected," said Liu. In the past, prisoners were regarded as society's scum. However, now, under the law, prisoners are simply those who have done something that violates the law.

Lives behind bars

Inmates live in different sections of the prison according to the length of their sentence. Each section has a library, a meeting room, a psychological treatment room and an entertainment room.

Inmates can visit entertainment rooms to play cards or chess on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. They are free to chat there too, sometimes about their families and sometimes about the past.

The standard catering fee for every inmate, according to the municipal government, is 126 yuan per month. Every morning, inmates eat deep-fried dough sticks. Lunch consists of one meat dish and one vegetable dish, as well as a bowl of steamed rice, and dinner included vegetable dishes and steamed bread.

Besides, every month, the prison gives inmates six to eight yuan as pocket money. Inmates are able to ask their family members to deposit some extra on a bankcard too, which can be used in the supermarket of the prison.

Silkworm bar

The prison mobilizes social groups to participate in the correc-

tion of inmates. It has forged good connections with local community groups. Psychologists from local universities are invited to give lectures to the inmates to solve some of their psychological problems. Lectures on women's health and psychology are given regularly.

There is also a psychological treatment room for depressed inmates with help from psychologists or jailers.

The prison has set up a bar-like chamber, called the 'Silkworm Bar', where inmates can vent their emotions in various ways, such as singing, screaming, or dancing with wild abandon. It tries to stabilize the emotions of inmates by organizing such activities as "talking about life in and outside the high walls".

Within the chamber's relaxing ambience, prisoners may receive psychological counseling



Activity room



Silkworm Bar

Photos provided by the Beijing Female Prison

and enjoy entertainment, thereby experiencing a measure of freedom in a specific place and at a given time. All the inmates, without exception, participate in the activities. The prison has designated a day in a week as a day for "deep emotional release".

In her words

Despite the tight control, attention has been paid to female inmates' characteristics of being wives, mothers and daughters.

Emotional management methods have been utilized to meet emotional demands. The heart-to-heart chats between inmates and guards and the sincere and warm care shown by the guards has awakened inmates' integrity.

"The guards are like family," said Cui. "They encourage me to smile in the mirror." Cui was also a mother, whose son has been successfully enrolled at Tsinghua University this autumn. "When I was sentenced, he was just a little baby," said Cui.

Cui feels lucky. "We are allowed to wear make up at the weekend, or on days when we meet with family members. And in every prison room there is a mirror," she said.

Because of her good behavior in prison, she has chance at parole.

"When I firstly came here, I fell into a trance as if pressure was mounting," said Jin Huilan, 56, serving 5 years for organizing prostitution, who was given the chance to hold the art exhibition a couple of weeks ago, "at morning roll call, I answered even when my name was not called. I felt I was ruined and had no hope at all."

She claimed that prison life was not that terrible. When she gets a cold, the jailers take care of her.

"Jail staff often talk with me and they invited psychologists to give me treatment. Later on, I became a little bit optimistic and calm, and devoted myself to drawing though I received little education when I was young. Finally, I find I deeply love drawing," she said.

In November this year, Jin Fulan will walk out of the prison gates to return to her family. "I give my heart-felt thanks to this prison that has given me a new life. I can return home at last," said Jin.

Open to public

The public can view at first hand what life is really behind bars following a decision in Beijing to open some of its locked prisons for public visits. The women's prison is the second prison in the city to welcome outside visitors on certain days. People over 18 years old can now apply for a one-day visit to the prison.

Plan to create urban jobs for rural workers

Beijing, September 15 (UPI) – Beijing has decided to boost employment by shifting farmers to urban areas, Xinhua said.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security said China plans to create 45 million jobs and transfer 45 million rural laborers to the non-farm sector and urban areas

over the next five years.

"In the next few years, the urban labor supply will grow at some 24 million plus annually. However, there will be only 11 million new jobs available from economic growth and retirement," said Tian Chengping, who runs the ministry.

Interview with the editor:

In my opinion, migration from poor rural areas to rich places is inevitable. The solution is not to stop them, nor to settle them down in small and medium towns.

Instead, the fundamental solution is to develop the places where they are living now – the vast, heavily populated countryside.

Development does not always mean money and resources. We can develop a

place into a rich and better area by other means, such as comfortable, knowledgeable, creative and easy access. I believe the huge number of farmers in China can create many more economic miracles, following on from your economic prosperity over the past two decades.

— **Claudia Foo, international news editor, Channel News Asia**

Over 300 million peasant workers live or work in China's cities.

CFP Photo



Chinese people fitter, but fatter



Feeding China's huge population is by no means easy.

AFP Photo

Beijing, September 19 (AFP / GNN.com) – China's population is fitter than it was five years ago, but expanding waistlines among men is a growing problem, a government survey has shown.

The survey of 495,000 people conducted across the country in 2005 showed "a slight increase in national physical fitness" since 2000, according to findings released by China's General Administration of Sport on Monday.

"For adults the physical fitness level of people aged 20 to 39 increased appreciably," since the first report was issued in 2000, the administration said.

However, the survey found obesity was an increasing problem, notably among middle-aged men.

While women had kept their weight steady, the obesity rate of male adults stood at 9.3 percent, up 1.7 percent from five years ago, while more than 30 percent were considered overweight, up 1.3 percent.

Fitness levels of Chinese living in the more affluent eastern coastal areas, notably in Shanghai and Beijing, were higher than their rural counterparts.

The impoverished rural provinces of Guizhou and Qinghai and the Tibetan and Xinjiang autonomous regions all scored poorly.



Interview with the editor:

First, we should cheer the great progress China has achieved in feeding its people. But as you always say, rich does not mean strong. It's the same for a country and an individual person.

I can understand that what China needs at present is prosperity and development. But what should we do after we have enough money and food? I think a demand for a healthy life, both materially and mentally, will emerge.

We should do more to help the poor in the western part of China, not by giving them money, but by providing them with knowledge, ideas, skills and techniques so they can support, develop, and enrich themselves.

— **Ryan Logtenberg, editor, Great News Network**

China to begin HDTV broadcasts in 2008

Beijing, September 19 (redorbit.com) – China will launch high-definition terrestrial digital TV broadcasts in 2008, according to a national five-year (2006-2010) plan made public on Wednesday.

China also aims to replace the existing analog cable television with digital cable television in all the cities in its eastern and central regions and most of those

in the western area by 2010, the plan says.

China will adopt a terrestrial digital TV broadcast standard, the mandatory broadcast signal for Chinese broadcasters on August 1, 2007.

Terrestrial digital TV transmissions can deliver signals to fixed TV sets and mobile televisions such as those on buses.

Digital TV broadcasting can

be transmitted via satellite, cable and terrestrial television, which increases the efficiency of operators and provides better quality pictures for viewers.

The number of households able to receive digital broadcasts rose from one million in 2004 to 4.13 million in 2005, according to the statistics from the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television.

have benefited," State Administration of Radio, Film and Television spokesman Zhu Hong told the annual session of the China Association for Science and Technology.

The percentage of Chinese



Displays showing a Blue-Ray picture and an HD-DVD image. China is digitalizing its TV channels and programs.

Reuters Photo

TV yet to reach 50 million

Beijing, September 19 (redorbit.com) – More than 50 million Chinese, mostly in the rural areas, were unable to receive TV or radio broadcasts at the end of 2005, down from 148 million in 1997, according to a

government official.

"The government has invested 3.44 billion yuan (US\$430 million) over the last eight years in expanding radio and TV transmission to outlying areas. So far, 97 million people

who could watch TV rose to 95.8 percent at the end of 2005 from 87.7 percent in 1997, while the percentage who could listen to radio programs had risen to 94.5 percent, up from 86 percent, according to the ministry.

Community of Indians in Beijing growing

Beijing, September 20 (www.ndtvprofit.com) – If you want to have Indian rotis in Beijing, get your own atta. This was Shelly Singh's mantra to all her friends and relatives from India when they visited Beijing.

And yes, they must also carry VCDs and DVDs of the latest Hindi films. But this was back in 1998.

When she first moved in to Beijing with her husband, there were no provision stores from where she could buy atta and no Indian channel to tune into.

"First we used to get Zee, then Sahara, now we get only Star Utsav," said R K Singh, an Indian in the Chinese capital.

But this was about a couple of years ago. Now tuning into a private Indian channel isn't too difficult and a provision store supplying authentic Indian *dal chawal* and *atta* is just a few days old.

Ten years ago, when the Chinese economy was just about opening up, there were only a handful of Indians in Beijing.

But with a growing interest in China by Indian companies, the number has gone up manifold. There is now an Indian community in Beijing that tries to help Indians coming into Beijing.

With close to 140 Indian corporates including Reliance, Tatas, Infosys, Satyam starting operations in China, more and more Indian companies now heading for China.

S R Doddappagoudhar, head of Bank of India's Beijing office, is not as worried about finding business in China as he is about finding the right food to eat.

"The biggest problem here is that no one understands English, and for vegetarians like me it is difficult here. I used to get my food from my Bangalore house," said S R Doddappagoudhar.

If you want a more lavish spread, then there is always the Taj Pavillion, one of the more popular Indian restaurants in Beijing, run by Mehnoz Pastakia.

Pastakia is a Mumbai boy who came to China 16 years ago. His clientele is mostly Western, who love authentic Indian food. But Mehnoz is better known as India's non-official ambassador here who always helps out people in need.

"It's a great honour if you are able to help people. Beijing is not an easy city, people don't understand English," said Mehnoz Pastakia, a restaurateur.

"Indians have merged really well here and they are treated like expats here, not like some second grade citizen," said R K Singh.

(Sandeeep Phukan)

Microsoft, China Telecom to link for search service



Xinhua Photo

By Qiu Jiaoning

Microsoft will provide its Live Search (a web search) service to China Telecom's 25 million broadband customers and more than 80 million Internet users, according to a joint announcement by the two companies Tuesday.

China Telecom will use Microsoft technology to expand the 114 voice search service, which currently provides customers through its Best Tone business,

the companies said. The two sides will launch their 114 Internet search engine service next month through their partner Website (www.vnet.cn).

"The implementation of the 114-based Internet service will enable voice, Internet, IPTV and mobile searches," said Yang Keke, general manager of China Telecom's Internet unit.

Luo Chuan, managing director of Microsoft's Windows Live unit said that the cooperation

significantly extends the reach of Live Search and will open up new opportunities for Microsoft's online advertising customers in China.

China Telecom is China's largest fixed-line operator in China, providing 210 million customers with voice service and has more than 400 city portal webs. For Yahoo China, Google and Baidu, top three search engines in China, the new Website will be a huge competitor.

FDI down 2.11 percent

Beijing, September 16 (AFP) – Foreign direct investment for January to August declined 2.11 percent from a year earlier to US\$37.19 billion, the Ministry of Commerce said in a statement on its website.

The actual FDI in August alone was down 8.49 percent year-on-year to US\$4.49 billion, the ministry said.

SAS flies to Beijing

Stockholm, September 18 (Reuters) – Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) announced a new direct route between Stockholm and Beijing, which will open in April next year.

The route is the latest addition to a roster of flights that includes paths between Copenhagen and Beijing and between Copenhagen and Shanghai.

The new flight will operate four times a week, using Airbus 340 aircraft which will depart from Stockholm late at night.

Alcatel wins metro signaling order

Paris, September 19 (AFX) – Alcatel won a 30 million euro metro signaling order in Beijing, it declared in Paris.

Alcatel will deploy the SelTrac S40 control system. It has already won the signaling contracts for Lines 6 and 8 of the network, run by the Beijing MTR Corporation.

Honda opens new China plant

Beijing, September 19 (Bloomberg) – Honda Motor Co, Japan's third-largest automaker, opened a new factory in Guangzhou, with a capacity of 120,000 Accord vehicles a year.

Honda is the first Japanese carmaker to set up a venture in China in 1998, five years ahead of Toyota and Nissan. The company had about 5.7 percent of China's passenger car sales in the first half, compared with Toyota's 4.5 percent and Nissan's 4.1 percent.

India's Zee shares with CCTV

Mumbai, September 18 (Reuters) – India's largest listed media firm, Zee Telefilms Ltd. said it had signed a content sharing agreement with China Central Television.

The deal with China International, an English-language news channel, covers news, feature programmes and films. Zee operates news, sports and entertainment channels in English, Hindi and regional languages.

China Merchants raises US\$2.4 bln in HK

Hong Kong, September 16 (Bloomberg) – China Merchants Bank, the country's most profitable lender, raised HK\$18.8 billion (US\$2.4 billion) selling shares in Hong Kong after investors ordered 53 times more stock than was available, bankers involved in the sale said.

The bank will start trading in Hong Kong on September 22.

Ferrari-Maserati launches Asian flagship

By Annie Wei

Ferrari-Maserati opened its biggest showroom in Asia in Golden Port Park this week. The new showroom covers 3,000 square meters and provides sales, and services like after-sales and parts-supply. Mirko Pietro Bordiga, Ferrari-Maserati's China manager, said they have special policies for Chinese clients. It only takes Chinese clients around six months to get the car while the average wait is 18 months in other countries.

According to the company, it sold 82 Ferraris and 70 Maseratis in China last year. Bordiga said that the sales have increased 95 percent compared to the previous year. China has become the second biggest market for Ferrari-Maserati in Asia, and is expected to be the fifth or sixth biggest market in the world within three years, Bordiga said.

GWM puts the 'pick up' into China's pick-ups

By Gareth George

The Great Wall Motor Company launched its Hover Pi, a stretch limousine version of their Hover CUV in Beijing recently.

"The 6.7 meters long Hover Pi is the only stretch CUV in the world," says GWM's Italian tech expert, Marco De Bonis. The car, which seats 10, features a 'European' style bar, a fridge to keep the Champers on ice and a stereo and a 15 inch LCD screen which looks suspiciously capable of accommodating those whose KTV lust won't wait until the ride is over.

Fidel Castro, the Cuban premier, got three when he ordered 600 Great Wall pick-up trucks in March. "This event marked Great Wall's first stride into the Cuban market," says De Bonis, who is marketing manager: Eurasia for SPA Motors. He plans to export the Chinese cars to Italy and continental Europe. GWM is already China's largest exporter of motor vehicles.

The limousine was unveiled at the Guangzhou motor show in June, along with the GW Superior Pick-Up, better known as the 'Wingle', apparently an amalgamation of the words 'wind' and 'eagle'.



A child speaks on her cell phone. A recent survey reveals that some 51 percent of all 10-year-olds in Britain own a mobile phone, but that figure rises to 91 percent by the time children hit the age of 12.

AFP Photo

Stores thrash out 'heavy metal' cosmetics

By Chu Meng

Thirteen department stores in Beijing and some shops in Hong Kong have removed SK-II skin-care products after the detection of banned heavy metals in the nine Japanese beauty products.

However, Procter and Gamble (Japan), the owner of SK-II,

denied it had added the substances to its products and said it would cooperate with the authorities to resolve the issue.

All of the 13 major department stores will refund the purchase price of SK-II products with conditions.

China's national quality watch-

dog urged its local branches to increase supervision of cosmetics products imported from Japan on Tuesday.

The customs department in Hong Kong also said it would conduct lab tests on the samples it had collected to see whether they contained the two substances.

Room for improvement at Google

By David Drakeford

Google's China Office moved to a new permanent headquarters in Beijing last week amid plans to spend hundreds of millions

of dollars to compete against its Chinese competitors, Baidu and Yahoo China.

In search revenue Google ranks third in China, having slid

from 23 percent of the market in the second quarter of 2005 to 13 percent in the first quarter of 2006. Baidu ranks first with a 44 percent share.

China, France launch first financial forum

By Han Manman

The first Sino-French Financial Forum was held yesterday at the Peninsula Beijing, attracting over 500 important figures from China and France.

Zhou Xiaochuan, president of the China People's Bank and Christian Noyer, president of the Banque de France jointly presided over the forum.

Leaders from the China Bank-

ing Regulatory Commission, China Insurance Regulatory Commission, China Securities Regulatory Commission and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange were present at the Forum.

Sino-South Korean JV for air-freight services

By Jiang Xubo

A new Sino-Korea joint venture for air-cargo services is expected to begin a trial run in China from June next year, according to an agreement

signed this week by Sinotrans Air Transportation Development (SATD), a subsidiary of China National Foreign Trade Transportation Group, and the Korean Air (KA).

Total investment for the China-based new company will hit US\$65 million, of which 51 percent will come from SATD and 25 will come from KA. And the contract will run for 30 years.

First female space tourist blasts off



Space travel should make human beings more aware of the fragility of the Earth's environment, Anousheh Ansari said before her trip to the International Space Station.

AFP Photo

An Iranian-American telecommunications entrepreneur took off this week on a Russian rocket bound for the international space station, achieving her dream of becoming the world's first paying female space tourist, Mike Eckel from Associated Press reports.

Anousheh Ansari was accompanied by a US-Russian crew on the Soyuz TMA-9 capsule, which entered orbit about 10 minutes after liftoff from the Russian cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

Ansari reportedly paid US\$20 million to become the fourth private astronaut to take a trip on a Russian spacecraft and visit the station.

"I'm just so happy to be here," she said ebulliently as she entered the rocket, watched by about a dozen relatives.

Ansari, 40, was due to return to Earth on Sept. 29.

Astronaut Lopez-Alegria said just a few years ago he was skeptical of private tourists. But he said now it was clear that the Russian space program needed such investment - and that without the Russian space program, the US space program would suffer.

Ansari said she expected seeing Earth from space would alter her view of the planet.

"You'll see how small and how fragile the Earth is compared to the rest of the universe," she said. "It will give us a better sense of responsibility."

Earlier she said she was eager to see Iran from space - she hasn't been back since emigrating to the United States - and hopes to inspire girls in her homeland to study science.



US entrepreneur Anousheh Ansari, the first female space tourist, smiles prior to her examination at a Cosmonaut Training Centre in Star City, outside Moscow, August 2006.

AFP Photo

Comments:

She's not a hero - she's just rich. The rich are not heroes just because they can buy whatever they want.

— knife kiffles

With all the people dying and starving, children being dumped in orphanages because their families cannot afford to keep them, this space cadet flaunts her wealth to make herself a hero.

— planet cruiser

Good for her. She fulfilled a lifelong dream. Nothing wrong with that.

— Goldn1s

It goes to show what a woman of Middle Eastern origins can do. And it shows why Middle Eastern men keep women down. The men are afraid of the female potential, and so the females are not allowed to become educated. Without female social contributions, that society will not be able to compete with societies where women have freedom to pursue their vision.

— dq tq

She earned a Master in engineering and with her husband built a company and became independently wealthy. She is not only a lesson to those back in Iran who beat their women for 'disrespecting' their husbands, but she is also a lesson for many Americans who continually are looking for a handout.

— MaxMan71

Like many people, I would gladly pay US\$20 million to go into Space if I had it. NASA hates it, because they can't do what the Russians are doing. They hate it because they - and by extension the US government - aren't the Gatekeepers into Space anymore.

I wish this woman well, and wish the best for anyone who has the guts to go up there. These people are explorers and adventurers. We used to encourage that sort of spirit.

— tour7

20 million for the right to join the 20,000 mile-high club? Probably worth it.

— gack splatt

'Lonelygirl' turns out to be Kiwi actress

By Mark Memmott (USA Today)

Mystery solved, it appears.

The New York Times and The Associated Press report today that YouTube phenom 'Lonelygirl15' is actually an actress who's about 20 years old - not the sweet 16-year-old she's pretended to be in a series of wildly popular web videos.

Credit for the scoop should actually go, though, to 18-year-old Matt Foremski. He's the son of Silicon Valley Watcher blogger Tom Foremski. In this post, they told how they figured out that Lonelygirl is Jessica Rose, an actress from Mount Maunganui, New Zealand.

The Times says "the whole project appears to be the early serialized version of what eventually will become a movie."

Comments:

Betrayed. It's all about the buck.

— New York

I do not feel betrayed. In fact I would watch it because it was good. And fun to watch. I never felt like it was the real thing, but still looked forward to seeing more. Keep it going. Love it.

— Bill

People online pretending to be someone else other than their real selves? Who could possibly have ever imagined it?

— Bob from Boston

A hoax can be played anytime on anyone anywhere. Woe unto the weak-minded who wasted their time and fell for the hoax. Get a life!

— The General Public

I don't get on to YouTube a lot, maybe three times a month, but everytime I have been on I noticed lonelygirl15 in the top viewed videos. I watched a few of them and found the videos interesting. I was a bit shocked to find out that this was a just a show. This is the first time anything like this has been done.

— a youtube watcher

No one posting here seems to care but this 'nobody's' videos have been seen by over 10 million people and it is the most popular channel on YouTube, one of top Internet sites. Yes somebody cared about this outing and this 19 year old girl from New Zealand is probably about to become very rich and famous.

— Ray

It's relatively pointless in making a big deal over nothing. And the Internet lies to everyone, so get over it and move on with your life!!

— Megan Breault

I still want to know what happens to her. I think she is part of a cult or something. It was obvious due to the high quality of the 'home videos' that it was professionally done, but it is still entertaining.

— Adam

I kind of suspected it. She was just too cute, too perfect, had her act down too pat.

But my hat is still off to the talent agency that created her. There is no denying that they are skilled.

— Orange

Weekly topics

Newsweek (US)

1. A web of exhibitionists
2. GOP ennui, Dem unease
3. An Iran plan for Bush
4. Does torture really work?
5. How to match your photos to a map

New York Times (US)

1. People who share a bed, and the things they say about it
2. In search of grocery gems
3. Nine lives and counting:

cat power sobers up

4. A portrait of an artist both loved and hated

5. Dumb as we wanna be

Toronto Star (Canada)

1. MBA students likelier to cheat
2. What the poor need: A strategy
3. 'Unknown substance' was whey powder, police say
4. Women cook to own beat

5. Getting closer to Uncle Sam

Daily Telegraph (UK)

1. Fears over lunchtime face-lift
2. Rupert - unleashed and unloved
3. The idiot philosopher
4. Deal ends 37-year Gibraltar 'siege'
5. Islam, like Christianity, is not above criticism

Sydney Morning Herald (Aus)

1. Can we talk: US star, Nine to interview Terri and Bindi
2. Woods fumes over bogus pictures of wife
3. Bust nets Aus\$35m of cocaine
4. Scathing dig at Beazley
5. The little wildlife warrior

(By Jiang Xubo)

'Terracotta warrior' caught

By Annie Wei

Pablo Wendel, a 26-year-old German student, has become an overnight star in China and abroad after he dressed up as a terracotta warrior and jumped into one of the exhibition tombs in Xi'an last weekend.

Wendel is thought to be the first tourist to jump into the display in the 27-year-old history of the museum.

"The jumping was not planned," Wendel said "it was spontaneous." Wendel admitted that he spent more than one month making the terracotta warrior costume and brought it with him to Xi'an. At first, Wendel only wanted to take a picture of



Pablo Wendel

Photo by Tom Mackenzie

himself in the costume in front of the warrior copies that tourists are allowed to photograph.

"It took a while for the museum people to realize I jumped in," Wendel said. And he was shocked when he was taken out by the museum security. Wendel has not been charged with a crime.

Jiang Bo, vice-director of security at the museum said the punishment for jumping into the cave depends on the damage caused. Jiang said that Wendel jumped in only because of his fondness for the sculptures, and his purpose was to take pictures not to disturb or destroy.

The museum said they will

put more security guards at the site to avoid such things happening again.

Wendel came to China in March this year as a student in the department of new media of the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province. However, Yang Xiujing, director of foreign affairs from China Academy of Arts, Hangzhou denied Wendel was one of their students, "He is not one of our students. It's not our business," he said.

Technically speaking, Wendel was not their student anymore. Before going to Xi'an, Wendel had finished his study. Wendel plans to leave for the USA next week.

Top sports film director wants to be 2008 volunteer

By Chen Shasha

Bud Greenspan, one of the leading sports film directors recently arrived in Beijing to talk with Chinese directors of Olympic film documentaries. As a 'gift to himself' for his 80th birthday on September 18, he presented his submission to be registered as a volunteer for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

"I filmed a lot of volunteers in 2004 Athens Olympics. It was their enthusiasm that made the games more colorful," Greenspan said.

Greenspan is a world-renowned writer, producer and director of sports films, and one of the world's leading sports historians. His films have received seven Emmy Awards.

"We learned how to tell stories from his films. The movable part of his films is not only based on championships, but also those who contributed and insisted on working for the Olympics," said Gu Jun, director from The Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio. "His passion made us doubt his age," Gu added.

There are more than one million people registered to be volunteers for the 2008 Olympic Games.

Wannabe Schumachers tear up the track in Beijing

By Chen Shasha

The Asian Formula Renault Challenge championships held last Sunday was a furious competition for drivers from both Asia and Europe and a memorable experience for motor racing fans.

Held at the Golden Port Motor Park in Jinzhanxiang, Chaoyang District, it featured 15 of some of the best young drivers from across Asia, Germany and Sweden.

"I was very excited and tried my best at the Beijing section of the race," said Pekka Saarinen, a driver from Sweden. "The competition can be a good lead into F1."

The 15 drivers, aged from 13 to 42, have a range of driving experience. Alexandre Imperatori, from Switzerland, took part in the championship for the first time. "I don't know why I chose to get into motor racing, maybe I was just born to race," he said, adding, "You shouldn't think of the danger when you compete. You just push on and get to the end of the race."

The next motor racing competition to be held in Beijing will be the International A1 championships in November.

Travelers offer subway distraction

By Huang Daohen

Two young Italians who have trekked by bicycle from France, put on an acrobatic performance at Dongdan subway station on September 20, causing quite a stir with the commuters.

They flipped over their tandem bike, and it became a percussion instrument. Opening a thick notebook, they showed passers-by the maps and photos taken during the journey. Beijing is one of their destinations. They will continue their journey to Shanghai. "We rely on the acrobatics to earn a living. We need the food and coins to survive," one was heard to bleat.



Photo provided by Beijing Evening News

Chinese folk gets all jazzed up

By Jackie Zhang

Eight Chinese folk song singers, popular German jazz singer Meri Voskannian, and the Celis Big Band from Bavaria finished their two-night special concerts this Wednesday. They have combined traditional Chinese folk songs with jazz for Beijing audiences.

The initiator and planner of the concert Li Yaron said that it was

the first time that she had invited a German jazz band to participate in the concerts.

At the concert, artists from China and Germany showed the unique features of Chinese folk and jazz. The performance by saxophones and a horse-headed stringed instrument, typically used by Mongolians, won warm applause.

From the Soviet ashes, new realism

By Jackie Zhang

A new Russian painting exhibition started this week at Beijing Russian Art Gallery. Called Russian New Realism Exhibition of Five Painters, it follows previous exhibitions held in May and July for the Russian year.

The five painters include Chuvina Alexander, Kravtsov Igor and Kollegova Daria. All are professors from the world-famous Repin Academy of Fine Art in Russia.

There are around 50 paintings exhibited, ranging from rural scenes to portraits. "Our exhibition will mainly show works of modern realism," said Shi Xiaoli, manager of Beijing Russian Art Gallery. "It is a chance for people who don't know about Russian painting to learn more about it."

The exhibition will last until next Thursday. The gallery is at Sanyu Hotel, Dabeyiao, Chaoyang District. Telephone: 6776-8593.

Louvre boffins to share with China

By Chu Meng

Two French professors from the Institute of the Louvre Museum, Paris will launch a fortnight's workshop at the China Academy of Fine Arts next Monday to share their experience of maintaining and preserving the priceless collections in the two countries' museums.

Amelie Simier and Francois-Rene Martin are professors of the institute and have worked there for 16 years between them. Both are also in charge of Le Petit Palais Museum in Paris.

"It is my first time to come to another country to give a lecture. And it is my first time to come to China as well," Simier said. "On Tuesday we visited the National Art Museum of China. We were impressed to see Chinese students taking notes while viewing the Italian design and fashion exhibition hall. This morning we went to look around the 798 Art Zone. We are looking forward to learning more about Chinese museum culture and pioneer art."

Li Jun, dean master of Cultural Heritage Department of the academy will attend the workshop. He said "I am most interested in hearing them talk about Chinese artworks and investment of those artworks in international markets. Collecting, not only among museums but also among individuals, is hotting up."

The Louvre Museum professors' workshop is a major part of the coming Forum of Curators of Museum International 2006 held in Beijing Agricultural Museum next week. More than 120 curators and experts from 65 museums around the world will gather to give speeches on museum development and cultural communication.

Is skin color more important than teaching ability?

By Gan Tian

Alex Gold is Australian. But unlike most Australians, his skin is yellow, he has big black eyes and black hair. In China, because of his Asian roots, he looks less 'foreign' than other Australians.

He came to Beijing last year after getting a part-time job at a company called Golden Translation. When he started hunting around for a new job in March this year, he was shocked at what he heard.

Alex's mother is an English teacher and inspired him to follow a career in teaching. After several years' study, he got a Cambridge English Language Teaching to Adults Certification, and two degrees in Computer Science and Asian Studies.

"I applied to work as an English teacher in a number of Chinese schools," he said. "I told them about all the experience. After talking to them on the telephone they

were all very pleased. Some of them even discussed how many lessons I would be given each week, how much I would be paid and other details about the job. But when I went to meet them they would all suddenly change their minds. They said, 'oh, you should have told us earlier that your skin was brown.'"

"The color of your skin is much more important than your teaching ability as a foreign teacher." That was one of the most frequent quotes Alex heard as he hunted for jobs. Some prospective employers even asked him to introduce some of his fair skinned friends to them - even if they did not have any formal teaching experience.

"I think some Chinese people really don't have a strong concept of multiculturalism. In desperation I would sometimes even try to speak Chinese badly to make myself seem more foreign to the people I was trying to get work from," said Alex.

One member of staff at the Beijing Bright Future English Training Center admitted that skin color was an issue when employing teachers.

"Though there are no regulations saying that people with yellow skin shouldn't be employed, skin color is really an important factor for us when we're choosing a foreign teacher."

Chen Jianjun, a postgraduate at Beijing Foreign Studies University, said there were no Asian-looking foreign teachers on his campus.

"Our teacher is from Canada and is white," he said. "He is good at teaching, and very well-organized. I don't care what color skin my foreign teacher has as long as he or she is qualified."

Chen said he believed the problem was down to marketing.

"Many training centers employ foreign teachers because of their western looks rather than their

qualifications," he said. "Everyone knows it is not right, but no one stands up to make a change."

Chen said the phenomenon should be blamed on the students instead of the employers. "These training centers are commercial organizations, which aim to make a profit, so they have to play by the market's rules - their students prefer a western-faced foreign teacher."

Wang Yan will start a linguistics course at Beihang University later this month. She said, "If there are two teachers who are both qualified, I would prefer to be taught by the teacher with white skin. It is the same if you want to learn Chinese, most people would probably prefer a Chinese looking teacher."

"The situation will not change until people, especially parents, change their cynical attitudes towards foreigners," said Alex.



William Valentino(right)

Photo provided by
www.hivolunt.net

Teaching gays that HIV is no game

By Gan Tian

William Valentino, general manager of corporate communication in Bayer's Beijing Branch, went to a gay pub in Dongcheng District last weekend. That wouldn't normally make the news in a cosmopolitan city like Beijing. But he was there to organize a game to show gay people how to prevent AIDS.

The game started with each of 27 people getting a tube containing liquid. Then all of the people began to exchange the liquid in the tube. The game rules said six people could change only once, but the other 21 people had to change more than four times.

William showed the result to everyone in the pub. The game was supposed to represent sexual intercourse. The liquid turning red showed that a participant had 'caught HIV'. Nine of the 27 people's liquid turned red, including one person who only changed once. William said, "I just want to tell people safe and healthy sexual intercourse is important. This is an interesting way of educating. People can accept it in this way. Using condoms is a way to protect everyone, including your family, friends, and yourself."

Chaoyang Chinese AIDS Volunteer Group helped Valentino to finish this task. Xiao Dong, an organizer for the group, said, "We've already invited William to be our senior consulting engineer. William's western knowledge and experience will give us much more space in our controlling and managing systems in our HIV/AIDS prevention program."

William stressed gay people are not only the targeted group. He said, "Everyone should know how to protect themselves. Students, sex workers, soldiers, not only homosexual people. What Chinese people should know is behavior is very important. I try to educate as many people as I can." William has done his lectures in this way among many groups in Beijing, including in the campus, communities and among sex workers.

Dutch-Chinese Ceramic Project to go on show



By Chu Meng

This Saturday a festive opening of the Dutch-Chinese Ceramic Project will take place at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Dongcheng District.

The exhibition is the result of the residency of four Chinese art-

ists at the European Ceramic Work Center in Den Bosch, the Netherlands. This project was sponsored by the Dutch Embassy.

Dutch artist Adriaan Rees supervised the project during this residency. Rees selected the artists, whom he met during

his earlier experiences in China. During their time in Holland, a wide variety of ceramic art works were created.

The center started this project in order to enable artists from non-western countries to enjoy a joint residency at the ceramic center.

Annually four artists, designers or architects can travel to Den Bosch to work together under the supervision of a Dutch artist.

The exhibition will last until October 1.

Photo provided by the
Dutch Embassy

The party planner

By Chu Meng

Do you have no idea what to prepare for your child's first birthday? Are you working so hard that you cannot find the time to organize your company party? Personal home party planner Kenith Taylor may be able to help.

Australian Kenith Taylor works as a party planner at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. "Let me put it another way," he said, "I'm a personal party consultant, providing our clients with a five-star tailor-made home party service according to

their requirements. I'll do business banquets, company parties, private social dinner parties, family reunions, birthdays, beach parties and carnivals. My maxim is: Let me fulfill your party dream."

Kenith was once asked by company bosses at IT firm Cisco, for a helicopter and hot air balloon for their guests. "It was extremely hard to find and rent those things in Beijing," he said, "but we did. And we rehearsed more than 10 times to make sure we mastered every single step."

Of course food is an essential part of a successful party. "In China, my clients put a lot of thought into the selection of food, from Australian lobster to Japanese Sashimi, from French truffles to Chinese cuisine," he said.

As it is a new concept in Beijing, Kenith has few rivals. His expertise has turned him into one of the leading party organizers. He has organized home parties for the World's Top 500 corporations such as Microsoft, IBM and BMW. He is also pop-

ular among celebrities, organizing parties for them after film premiers and festivals.

Chang She, a famous Chinese female movie producer, got Kenith to organize one of her parties. "It left one of the deepest impressions on my life," she said. "We had the party when I came back from the Cannes Film Festival. I remember that it was a wild swimming pool and barbecue party. We all dressed up wild and sexy. It was a great party and it was great for networking."

By Han Manman

With its development over 20 years, the HSK has become the first choice for testing Chinese proficiency for many groups worldwide. This article will aim to help you prepare for the HSK test. We have interviewed two overseas students who have recently passed HSK level 7.

Preparing for your HSK test

About HSK

The Chinese Proficiency Test, known as *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* (HSK) is China's national standardized test designed and developed by the HSK Center of Beijing Language and Culture University to assess the Chinese language proficiency of non-native speakers (including foreigners, overseas Chinese and students from Chinese national and linguistic minorities). The test results are used for admission to Chinese universities and by certain employers to assess language proficiency.

There are three HSK test levels: beginning level (HSK Basic), elementary to intermediate level (HSK Elementary-Intermediate), and advanced level (HSK Advanced). HSK tests are given periodically in China and at approved locations overseas. Each test lasts from two to two and a half hours.

Preparation for HSK

HSK is not based on any particular textbook or course of study. Therefore candidates may refer to any textbook in preparing for the test. Nevertheless, it is important that all candidates read the HSK test syllabus carefully, a guide for the pre-test preparation. It contains an introduction to HSK, a sample HSK test paper and the key, HSK glossary and a CD of the sample listening questions.

Two students from America and Germany tell us their experiences:

Michael Taylor, 23, from the US, passed level 7 and is currently preparing for



China is promoting the HSK to evaluate overseas students' Chinese capability.

CFP Photo

Levels 8 and 9.

For my preparation I spent about 250 yuan on various books and materials. My goal was level 7, so I studied for level 8 and level 9. I spent about three months preparing for my HSK level 7. The grammar wasn't so hard; the hard part was vocabulary in general, the fill-in section, and the listening comprehension. I basically just read a lot, did practice tests until I was averaging over 85 percent, and then I took all my listening comprehension CDs, ripped them to mp3 and then listened to them at night in my sleep. My next level is advanced, and that is hard, too hard for me right now.

The Beijing Language and Culture University materials are best for the grammar, but Peking University publishes much better listening materials and practice tests. Ignore English entirely. You know you are ready when you start dreaming in Chinese and forgetting English words.

Mareike Ohlberg, 22, is from Germany. She came to Beijing to study Chinese in 2004 and passed the HSK level 7 last year.

I majored in Chinese in Germany. I took the HSK test not only because I wanted to see which level I would achieve in the HSK after years of studying

Chinese but also because having an HSK certification increases my chances of finding a job in China. As I still have a year to go before I graduate and the HSK certification only lasts two years, I'm considering for HSK level 8 in Germany soon.

I didn't do any extra training before the test, besides going to class. I just prepared by myself. I found doing HSK sample tests very useful. It's the best way to help you familiarize yourself with the examination.

Test question types

Listening:

True or False: there will be a picture on your paper, and

you will hear a description of it. Choose yes, no, or not mentioned.

Reading:

Vocabulary: one word in a sentence will be underlined, choose the correct meaning from four choices.

Short passage reading: read a passage and answer some questions about it.

Writing:

This is to test your understanding of Chinese characters. You will be given characters and asked to compose words and sentences. For the advanced test, you will need to write a short article.

Useful HSK links

www.hanban.edu.cn

www.hsk.org.cn

HSK is held regularly in mainland China. The following is the fee and time schedule for 2006 HSK tests.

HSK (Basic): two tests in 2006, 200 yuan.

The first test: April

The second test: December

HSK (Elementary-Intermediate): three tests in 2006, 250 yuan.

The first test: April

The second test: June

The third test: December

HSK (Advanced): two tests in 2006, 400 yuan.

The first test: April

The second test: October

Information and services are available at the HSK Center of BLCU.

Tel: 82303672, 82303962

Fax: 82303962

www.blcu.edu.cn

Contact: Chai Xingsan or Wu Xiaoyu (Office of Test Affairs)

N W

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Zhang Jian (Juliet) and Hao Bin (Romeo) rehearsing under the instruction of Ivan Cavallari and Jane Bourne, from the Stuttgart Ballet.

Sergei Prokofiev and John Cranko

The composer Sergei Prokofiev was born in Ukraine in 1891 and completed the score of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1935. As one of the most famous masterpieces, the ballet score is renowned for its ability to so poetically convey Shakespeare's missing words through its finely crafted leitmotifs and faithfulness to the play.

However, at the beginning, things weren't easy for Prokofiev – the Kirov and Bolshoi Theaters both refused to stage his ballet. The score was first performed in Brno, Czechoslovakia in 1938, an event that went by almost unnoticed. Meanwhile, Prokofiev presented his music in orchestral suites and piano pieces, which soon got great acclaim.

The first Soviet performance of the ballet was held at the Kirov Theater in 1940 with Galina Ulanova, the first Soviet to dance Juliet. Despite so little hope for success, the ballet was well received and has been popular ever since.

Prokofiev went on to write his second three-act ballet, *Cinderella*, which was premièred by the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow in 1945. And his last ballet composition *The Stone Flower* is based on a nationalistic fairy tale, but he died before the performance by Bolshoi in 1954.

Choreographer John Cranko was born in South Africa in 1927 and studied dance at the University of Cape Town. He choreographed *La Belle Helene* for the Paris Opera Ballet in 1955 and after choreographing *The Prince of the Pagodas* for The Royal Ballet, he was appointed ballet director in Stuttgart.

The breakthrough for Cranko came in 1962 with the world première of *Romeo and Juliet*, which critics claimed was the best adaptation of Prokofiev's score. This, along with his dramatic story ballets such as *Onegin*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Carmen* and *Traces*, secured his place in the pantheon of great choreographers.

Cranko is known for his nuanced story telling, clear dramatic structure and his exquisite mastery of the art of the 'pas de deux'. He died unexpectedly at age of 45 on a return flight from a successful tour to the US.

Highlights

1. Three pairs of Romeo and Juliet with distinct styles:
Zhang Jian (Juliet A) and Hao Bin (Romeo A): the Prima Ballerina uses her perfect body and performance to dance with the first choice Romeo of Stuttgart.
Zhu Yan (Juliet B) and Sheng Shidong (Romeo B): a mature Prima Ballerina with solid technique dances with a Guangzhou boy.
Cao Shuci (Juliet C) and Yu Bo (Romeo C): the youngest girl naturally expresses the feelings of Juliet with her first kiss with the skillful Prima Dancer.
2. The pillow dance in long and heavy ball gowns at the court in Act One.
3. The dying dance of Mercutio at the end of Act Two.
4. Pas de deux between Romeo and Juliet and pas de trois and quatre among Romeo, Mercutio and friends.

Putting their

Chinese dancers stage Cranko's Romeo and Juliet



Hao Bin (center), Du Jichao (left) and Wu Yan

By Shelley Xie

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is a masterpiece of different art forms. The National Ballet of China (NBC) is preparing to stage a play by the master. From the Stuttgart as possible, to give local a

Going from Norman Walker to the Stuttgart, are surrounded by that number to 85, a new record in the world. NBC has managed to make the happy with the result. If NBC can it to be given the copyright to *The Taming of the Shrew* desperate to perform.

Having performed *Pink Floyd* and *Juliet* by John Cranko, from Germany, one of the ballet centers even for me," says Zhao. "So I hope sponsorship of the China Petroleum chance to see some more world-class

Romeo and Juliet will be in Tianjin. The NBC has managed to make the happy with the result. If NBC can it to be given the copyright to *The Taming of the Shrew* desperate to perform.

Having performed *Pink Floyd* and *Juliet* by John Cranko, from Germany, one of the ballet centers even for me," says Zhao. "So I hope sponsorship of the China Petroleum chance to see some more world-class



Cao Shuci as Juliet and Yu Bo as Romeo

best feet forward

Romeo and Juliet

star-crossed lovers, *Romeo and Juliet*, have been interpreted in all kinds – dramas, movies and musicals to name but a few. Now the National Ballet of China in Beijing will bring the characters to life over the National Holiday. The company has performed *Romeo and Juliet*. “The first was in the early 1990s,” says the director. “We invited an American choreographer and professor (Norman Cranko) to the rehearsals. This time we will try to get as close to the original as possible and the orchestra to the costumes, we will try to get as close to the original as possible.”

Cranko is a big leap. The lead dancers, some of whom have been recently trained by a group of 60 other dancers in the theater. The orchestra increases the history of Chinese ballet. There are also more than 200 costumes. It is impossible to get as close to the original as possible and their German and Canadian partners seem to impress Stuttgart with *Romeo and Juliet*, then they are more likely to perform *the Shrew* and *Onegin*, two plays that the NBC dancers are familiar with.

The *Ballet* by Roland Petit from France earlier this year and now *Romeo and Juliet* by the National Ballet of Germany, NBC is trying its best to learn from the best. “When I went to the National Ballet of Germany, the ballet performance was fresh, original and interesting, and that we can get further cooperation with Stuttgart Ballet under the leadership of the German and Chemical Corporation, and as a result, give our audiences the best possible piece of ballet.”

Performance from September 30 to October 2.



Photos provided by National Ballet of China



(Left to right) Lu Na, Meng Ningning and Wang Yitong

Ivan Cavallari, guest regisseur (choreography director) from Stuttgart Ballet

“*Romeo and Juliet* is a ballet which [John] Cranko has put all his efforts into making as faithful to Prokofiev’s ballet score as possible.”

It is a story that everyone is familiar with but the ending remains intriguing to most audiences. In this adaptation, I suggest you keep a close eye on Mercutio (Romeo’s friend). He is the second major role, who is realistic, intelligent, loves joking around and knows Romeo better than anyone else. To dance this role is quite a challenge.

This is the first time Chinese dancers have performed Cranko’s version. The dancers here come from very different cultural backgrounds to their counterparts in the west and this affects the performance. For example, I was surprised to discover something that never happens to western actresses – the youngest Juliet (Cao Shuci) experienced her first kiss on stage, so was naturally shy and she blushed, which is exactly how Juliet reacts to kissing Romeo for the first time.

Although they need to put themselves into a western story, I think that when it comes to love, there’s no difference. Some of the ballerinas are excellent and I appreciate all of the dancers, although some still need to improve.”

Marjory Fielding, costume assistant to Susan Benson from the National Ballet of Canada

“In this production, the costumes were designed by Susan Benson for the National Ballet of Canada 12 years ago. The costumes are meant to show a society that is deteriorating. There are a lot of dark colors, broken diamonds and decorations, especially on the ball gowns. When the lovebirds appear, they represent the only pure thing among all the darkness inside people’s hearts, which are ravaged by power, social status and hate. So Juliet wears a peach colored dress and Romeo is in green. At the court, the Capulets’ clothes illus-

trate their wealth and power, while softer greens demonstrate the gentler and milder Montagues.”

Zhao Ruheng, art director of National Ballet of China

“The tradition of the National Ballet of China is ‘la comédie ballet’ (drama ballet). So this time, although we have encountered lots of difficulties, we



Zhu Yan as Juliet and Sheng Shidong as Romeo

insisted on dancing Cranko’s *Romeo and Juliet*, to develop our young dancers’ techniques.

In recent years, we have cooperated with many foreign masters from the UK, France and the US. Our dancers have tried various styles of ballet, such as modern, neo-classical and rock and roll, and they have improved a lot. We staged *Romeo and Juliet* in the early 1990s, and the new version by Cranko marks a breakthrough for our young generation. At the beginning, we were worried about whether they could act, or jump out of the story in the middle, or understand the feelings of the more noble characters in the performance.

Everyone is now rehearsing very hard to perfect his or her performances. I hope that our work will bring local audiences closer to this most prestigious and brilliant ballet.”

Cao Shuci, intern dancer, the 17-year-old Juliet

“I feel really grateful that I have the opportunity to dance in such a grand play with so many excellent dancers. Before playing Juliet, I read the play and watched the movie and performances by other ballet companies. For me, the most inspiring Juliet is Alessandra Ferri from the American Ballet Theater.

This is the first time I have played such a big role and I also rarely dance on my own, so I sometimes feel quite nervous. But Zhu Yan (Juliet A) has helped a lot by sharing her experiences with me and Yu Bo (Cao’s Romeo) is a very good partner.”

Hao Bin, Stuttgart Ballet’s first Romeo

“Before I played Romeo, I researched his character by reading the play and watching film versions. Some people think that Romeo is a kind of melancholic playboy, falling in love with Rosaline first, and then Juliet. But I don’t think so. In Act One, I perform like a teenager who first experiences love. When I see Juliet, my true love, I become a man who is responsible and mature.

I played the leading dancer in *Le Corsaire* this year so I’m quite excited to play the main character again. There are lots of beautiful but difficult solos. The music is wonderful but is sometime difficult to keep time to. It’s taken a lot of practice but I now feel ready to perform this character to music.”

Wu Yan, the mature and experienced Mercutio

“For me, it’s quite a challenge to play Mercutio. As a character that strings along other figures, I want to show a humorous, intelligent and eccentric face on the outside, but a kind, thoughtful and loving one on the inside. The highlight, bizarrely, is when my character dies at the end of Act two. At that moment, my performance releases the character’s life philosophy – to love life and the people and things around us. I hope audiences can understand that through my dancing. This is my favorite part of the dance.

I have lots of sparkly steps and movements especially designed for him. Some of them are quite difficult – you will see them on stage!”

Black Lamb and Grey Falcon



Rebecca West

Rebecca West
Penguin Classics
1181 pages
Synopsis

Widely recognized as West's most distinguished nonfiction work, this book describes the author's travels to Yugoslavia with her husband in 1937 – a journey overshadowed by the growing inevitability of the Second World War.

Traveling through Yugoslavia is pretty popular today. But I reckon this must have been pretty groundbreaking in 1941.

"This monumental work explores the complex history of Yugoslavia, its heroes, politics and culture. The book probes the roots of the heart-rending ethnic divisions in the region. You may find some fault with West's scholarship and disagree with her opinions, but this is nonetheless an absorbing and influential portrait, indicative of the time. It's a big, challenging book – some call it the best ever written on the Balkans."

– **Longitudebooks.com**

Like who?

"Part travelogue, part history, part love letter on a thousand-page scale, Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* is a genre-bending masterwork written in elegant prose. But what makes it so unlikely to be confused with any other book of history, politics, or culture – with, in fact, any other book – is its unashamed depth of feeling: think *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* crossed with *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. West visited Yugoslavia for the first time in 1936. What she saw there affected her so much that she had to return – partly, she writes, because it most resembled "the country I have always seen between sleeping and waking," and partly because "it was like picking up a strand of wool that would lead me out of a labyrinth in which, to my surprise, I had found myself immured."

– **Mary Park, Amazon.com**

Well there's one. Isn't it a bit dated as a travel guide though?

"Despite its age, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* remains the most perceptive treatment of the intricate ethnic politics and "violent inconsistencies" of the Yugoslav lands available. A well-

educated, upper class Briton, West a professional writer and literary critic, not to mention HG Wells' mistress and mother of his son, traveled widely throughout Yugoslavia during the mid- and late-30s."

– **AA Nofim, Strategypage.com**

So this isn't exactly Lonely Planet fare. I'll go elsewhere for a list of youth hostels...but hang on. What is it then?

"West's story is in at least one respect a classic tale of the modern world: the encounter of the liberal mind with something much older than itself, something alien to it. Something fully historical."

– **Alan Jacobs, Professor of English at Wheaton College**

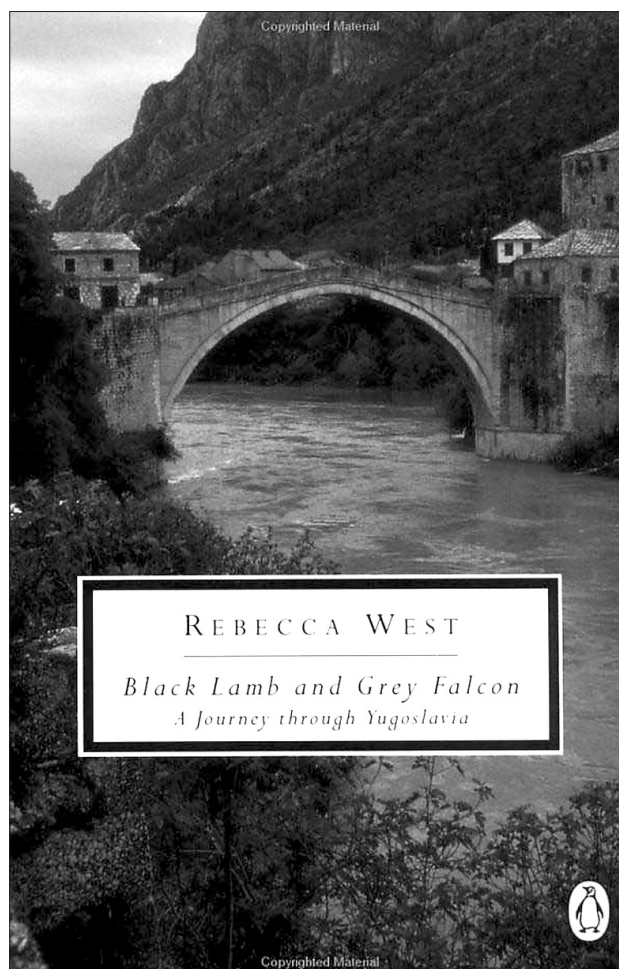
A liberal in pre-war Yugoslavia? That sounds like a story in itself...

"Although West has her prejudices (she tends to be anti-Catholic and anti-Italian), overall her treatment of the various groups in the region is even-handed, and she can be, and she is liberal in distributing both praise and blame to all and sundry."

– **AA Nofi, Strategypage.com**

What sort of praise and blame?

"As she goes deeper into Serbia, she sees more and more clearly a side...that is dark and inexplicable to her. She thinks of a place called the Sheep's Field in Macedonia, where these people whose 'preference for the agreeable over the disagreeable' she loves meet at an ancient stone to sacrifice animals, in hopes of making women fertile. ('But what they were doing at the rock was abominable.') She thinks above all of the strange fact that Prince Lazar is the greatest hero in Serbian history, not in spite of but because he lost the battle: the prophet Elijah, in the form of a gray falcon, demands that he choose



between an earthly and a heavenly kingdom, and he chooses the latter. To the Serbs this is an act of great courage and piety, since the blood of so many of Lazar's people will therefore be on his hands; to West, it is an abysmal revelation.

"If this disposition to be at once Christ and Judas is inborn," I thought, "we might as well die, and the sooner the better, for the defeat is painful after the lovely promise."

– **Alan Jacobs**

Sounds pretty heavy. What did the critics make of it at the time?

"[It] received rave reviews from *The New York Times Book Review*, which deemed it a paragon of travel writing, and from *The New Yorker*, which likened it to TE

Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*."

– **The Atlantic**

We call that a thumbs up around here. Does it still resonate today?

"Hey, Croat!" shouts Rebecca West's driver Dragutin to a young Yugoslav soldier posted in Serbia, in an exchange that is bound to strike the reader as prophetic: "You're a brave fellow. How do you like us Serbs?" "Very well, very well!" he answered smiling. "Everybody is kind to me here, and I had thought you were my enemies." "Eyah!" said Dragutin, twisting the lobe of the boy's ear, "We'll kill you all some day." The boy wriggled and laughed..."

– **Richard Tillinghast**

(By Gareth George)

Local shelf

East of the Mountains

By David Guterson
Bloomsbury Publishing
PLC, 320 pages, 105 yuan

In a novel of personal discovery set against the backdrop of the Columbia Basin of central Washington, retired heart surgeon Ben Givens, suffering from terminal colon cancer, embarks on one final, epic hunting odyssey through the American west. This beautifully written novel, much of it focused on the interior landscape of a fine and mature mind, is illuminating for anyone who thinks suicide is a rational and perhaps obvious alternative to the pain of a slow death.

Vintage Murakami

By Haruki Murakami
Vintage Books USA,
192 pages, 85 yuan

Not since Yukio Mishima and Yasunari Kawabata has a Japanese writer won the international acclaim enjoyed by Haruki Murakami. His genre-busting novels, short stories and reportage, which have been translated into 35 languages, meld the surreal and the hard-boiled, deadpan comedy and delicate introspection.

Vintage Murakami includes the opening chapter of the international bestseller *Norwegian Wood*; 'Lieutenant Mamiya's Long Story: Parts I and II' from his monumental novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*; 'Shizuko Akashi' from *Underground*, his non-fiction book on the Tokyo subway attack of 1995; and the short stories 'Barn Burning' and 'Honey Pie'. Also included, for the first time in book form, is the short story, 'Ice Man'.

Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China

By John Pomfret
Henry Holt, 336 pages, 220 yuan

John Pomfret arrived in China as a fresh-faced student in 1981. He was given an unusual chance to study and live in a dormitory with Chinese students at Nanjing University, something that even now is not common in China's institutions of higher learning. His new book *Chinese Lessons* is a short, gripping tale about five of his classmates: how they got to Nanjing University, and what has happened to them since then. A first-hand account of the remarkable transformation of China over the past forty years as seen through the life of an award-winning journalist and his four Chinese classmates.

Available:
Beijing Bookworm
Where: Building 4, Nan
Sanlitun Road, Chaoyang
Tel: 6586 9507

(By Han Manman)

Even late birds can have their worm. These four restaurants are the most famous late-night eateries in town.

Night owls catch their worms



Spicy pork at The Three Guizhou Men

Chic and stylish – The Three Guizhou Men

By Huang Daohen

Ever since three Guizhou artists opened their restaurant, Three Guizhou Men, near the Friendship Store four years ago, Guizhou cuisine has become increasingly popular in Beijing. Serving up the region's specialties, which balance

sour, hot, salty and sweet flavors, the restaurant is open 24-hours.

The restaurants are casual, but still incredibly chic and stylish. The Gongti outlet I visited is housed in a complex of clubs and bars (including Coco Banana) and boasts sexy contemporary Chinese paintings

on each wall.

The menu contains a list of Sichuan favorites (Guizhou is adjacent to Sichuan) and many more local dishes. Most of the diners were indulging in *suan tang yu*, sour soup hotpot.

We ordered a starter of wild

vegetables with chili sauce and a plate of Guizhou sausages (*xiang chang pai gu*). Every dish was wonderful and different from anything available in most other Beijing restaurants. If you get the chance, give this stylish eatery a try.

Three Guizhou Men

Where: 8, Gongti Xilu, Chaoyang

Price: 80 yuan per person

Tel: 6551 8517

Other outlets:

6 Guanghua Xilu, 6502 1733

1-2/F Bldg 7, Jianwai SOHO, 5869 0598



Light dishes served in Bellagio

Bellagio: a breeze from Taiwan

By Chu Meng

Trendy Bellagio, with high ceilings and large windows, makes for a bright, comfortable dining spot.

The Taiwanese food here is good. As well as serving typical Sichuan dishes with a Taiwanese twist, Bellagio offers authentic Taiwanese regional specialties

such as *mi gao*, glutinous rice with dried mushrooms and dried shrimp. The staff will also recommend other tempting choices like stir-fried rice noodles, tofu in clay pots and meatball soup. But desserts have never been an integral part of the Chinese meal; savory dishes like pork-filled fried eggplant are the main draw.

You can finish your meal with the *hong dou bing*, a Taiwanese-style dish of crushed ice and toppings of red bean, green bean, mango, strawberry or peanut. It is this dessert that has brought fame to Bellagio.

Bellagio stays open until 4am, which makes it popular with Beijing's after-hours crowd. Not only

does it have probably the best-dressed clients of any restaurant in town, it also must be the only place where all staff members have identical cropped haircuts.

Bellagio

Where: No. 6 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang

Open: 10am-4am the next day

Tel: 6551 3533

Beat the munchies at Jin Ding Xuan

By Gan Tian

If you ever suffer from an attack of the nighttime munchies, then Jin Ding Xuan late night snack restaurant is for you.

This sizeable eatery serves up dishes from Guangdong, Sichuan, Jiangsu – provinces famous for their snacks. There

are more than 80 varieties from Hongkong and Guangdong Province alone.

The crystal prawn dumplings, traditional southern Chinese snacks, are a must if you go for an early morning breakfast. As the name suggests the dumplings are small, white and perfectly formed

and the sticky dough is delicious.

The beef balls, made with 100 percent beef and no flour are tasty and great value for money.

Jin Ding Xuan is also a popular spot for celebrities and partygoers

Jin Ding Xuan

Ditan Branch:

Where: No.77 Hepingli Xijie, Chaoyang

Tuanjiehu Branch:

Where: No.15 Tuanjiehu Nanlu, Chaoyang

Fangzhuang Branch:

Where: No.16 Fufang Road, Fangzhuang, Fengtai

Cost: 60 yuan per person



Fried Tofu slices



Fishy delights at Hot Fish restaurant

Hot Fish gets it spot on

By Chu Meng

Hot Fish is not a hole-in-the-wall restaurant. This restaurant on Super Bar Street, is one of seven chain branches of Chongqing-style braised fish.

Braised fish (38 yuan) is its signature dish. When it was served, the dish was still bubbling. A waiter used a colander spoon to pick out all the red chilli peppers. It was then that I found the dish did not quite fit its Chinese name, *shui zhu yu*, or water-boiled fish. There was no water but scalding hot oil in the pot. Each piece of fish was sliced very thinly and had few fish

bones. My first bite showed that *shui zhu yu* does not always have to be greasy. Hot Fish does an excellent job of emphasizing the spicy part of the dish.

The waitress helped me order another three staple Chongqing dishes: crispy duck (22 yuan), mapo doufu (10 yuan) and soup with pickled vegetables and vermicelli and fish head (12 yuan). Usually I'm very careful when ordering dishes with duck meat because if it is not done right, it smells awful. But the crisp duck here was superb. The browned pieces were just crispy enough to accentuate the mouth-

watering colors and smells.

If the braised fish was a good start, then the fresh soup was a great conclusion. The chef must have waited quite a while for the soup to turn milky white. The Chongqing pickles added a slightly spicy flavor to the hot soup, which helps one sweat it out, especially on a summer day.

Hot Fish (Laitai branch)

Where: Super Bar Street, Ladies' Street, Chaoyang

Open: 11am-4am

Tel: 8454 5147/8451 5426

Other branches:

Where: South of Chongqing

Hotel, Xibahe, Chaoyang

Tel: 6420 4776

Where: 1/F, Bldg B, Yuanfang

Hotel, Xibahe, Chaoyang

Tel: 6422 2329

Where: 1/F, Bldg 424, Wangjing

Xiyuan 4th Area, Chaoyang

Tel: 6470 7221

Where: Opposite the Jinyuan

Shopping Mall, Haidian

Tel: 5198 0586

Where: 6/F, E-Zhongxin Digital City, Zhongguancun, Haidian

Tel: 6269 1090

Where: 7 Xinxu Lu, Shangdi, Haidian

Tel: 6297 1389

10% off

Buy moon cakes at Yu Cha Shan Fang (1113N Jinyuan Yansha, Haidian) and get 10% off until September 30. For details, call 6909 6669.

**12% off**

Buy any Scandinavian furniture at Qu Mei Furniture store (29 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang) and get 12% off until September 25. For details, call 6461 1709.

**20% off**

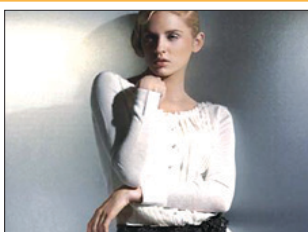
Get 20% off household appliances at B&Q (31 Guangqulu, Chaoyang) until September 29. For details, call 8776 8811.

**30% off**

Get 30% off Folli Follie at Chen Xi shopping store (1 Guomao Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang) until September 22. For details, call 6505 6118.

**30%-50% off**

Get 30% off fashionable clothes brand Sefon at Chen Xi shopping store (1 Guomao Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang) until September 30. Buy two items and get 40% off, buy three and get 50% off. For details, call 6505 6118.



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E-mail: kunlunht@public3.bta.net.cn http://www.hotelkunlun.com

32% off

People from Jiang Su province will get 32% off their meals if they eat at Jin Ling Jiang Xian Yu Gang restaurant (135 Beilishilu, Xicheng) between now and September 25. For details, call 6831 3438.

**Up to 50% off**

Get up to 50% off outdoor door equipment at Sheng Huo Wu Xian (26 Kangzhuanglu, Daxing) until September 17. For details, call 8128 2288.

**45% off**

Study at the So Easy American English School (608 Men Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang) and get 45% off (for the first 100 students) until September 30. For details, call 8565 6567.

**50% off**

Eat at Lai Fu Shi snack house (33 Guangshun Beidajie Wangjing, Chaoyang) and get 50% off until September 28. For details, call 6014 3959.

**50% off**

Eat mutton chops at Lao Cheng Yi Guo restaurant (19 Block 4, Xiluoyuan, Fengtai) and get 50% off until September 30. For details, call 8727 1218.

**50% off**

Eat tuna sushi at Jing Yue Sushi Restaurant (Min Feng Hutong Xidan, Xicheng) on Saturday and enjoy 50% off until September 30. For details, call 8806 7266.

**Traders' Hotel**

Beef-up for the approaching winter at Oriental in Traders' Hotel, flavor-rich tonic soups stewed in clay pots may not be targeted for the soul, but ancient tradition has it that these nutritious dishes are winter chill chasers. Offer lasts until September 30. For more information, call 6505 2277 ext. 34.



(By Terence Lu)

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Sudoku - Lost in digits

By He Jianwei

The name Sudoku is a Japanese abbreviation. 'Su' means number in Japanese, and 'Doku' refers to the single place on the puzzle board that each number can fit into. It also connotes someone who is single - one way to describe the game is solitaire with numbers.

The game has become wildly popular in the last two years. Step up and challenge your brain.

Variants

While the nine by nine grid is the most common form of Sudoku, there are many variants of the game. Four by four Sudoku with two by two subsections are fun for younger audiences, and easy to deliver to mobile devices like cell phones (this site - www.sudokuonline.net - offers a four by four variant). There are five by five games, six by six and seven by seven games. For the truly addicted, there are even 16 by 16 grids, not to mention a 25 by 25 grid apparently offered by Japanese game developer Nikoli. Sudoku puzzles using letters and symbols, some even spelling words in their final solutions are also becoming available. Other variants require computational skills.

Here are some of the more notable variations:

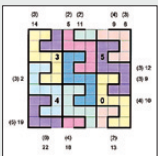
Pair sudoku:

Fill the grid with the digits one to nine. Each row and each column will have exactly one of each digit. Each red region must contain one pair of numbers. Each cyan region must contain two pairs of numbers. Each yellow region must contain three pairs of numbers.



007 Cylindrical Cross Sums Sudoku:

Fill each column, row and outlined colored region with the digits zero, zero, one to seven. (The zero appears twice, to make this one more difficult.) The numbers outside the grid are the sums of the digits you come across first: the first number (in brackets) is the number of digits you have to add up; the second number is the sum. So (three) two means: first three digits are zero, zero and two in any order.



History

Although its name is Japanese, its origins are actually European and American, and the game represents the best in cross-cultural fertilization.

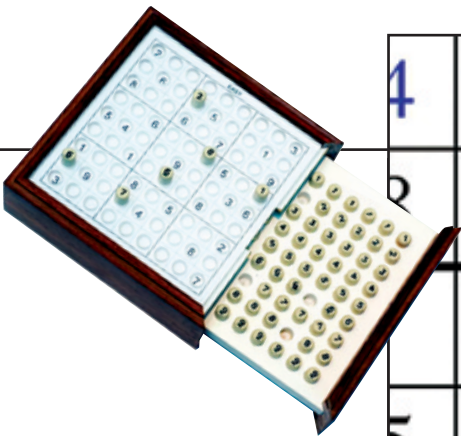
The 18th century Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler developed the concept of 'Latin Squares' where numbers in a grid appear only once across and up and down. In the late 1970's, Dell Magazines in the US began publishing what we now call Sudoku puzzles using Euler's concept with a nine by nine by square grid.

In the mid-1980s, the president of the Japanese puzzle giant Nikoli, Maki Kaji, urged the company to publish a version of the puzzle that became a huge hit in Japan. Nikoli gave the game its current name.

Wayne Gould, a retired Hong Kong judge, came across a Sudoku puzzle in a Japanese bookshop in 1997, and spent years developing a computer program to generate them. In the fall of 2004, he was able to convince *The Times* to start publishing daily Sudoku puzzles developed using his software. The first game was published on November 12, 2004. Within a few months, other British newspapers began publishing their own Sudoku puzzles.

Once again, Sudoku's popularity crossed the oceans. By the summer of 2005, major newspapers in the US were also offering Sudoku puzzles like they would daily crossword puzzles. In the US, the *New York Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *USA Today* offered Sudoku puzzles to their readers by September 2005.

Within the context of puzzle history, parallels are often cited to Rubik's Cube, another logic puzzle popular in the 1980s. Sudoku has been called the "Rubik's cube of the 21st century".



only one cell at a time.

Available now on - Nokia: Series 60, N-Gage, 7650, 6600, 6630, 6680, 6260, 7610 and Sony Ericsson P800, P900, p910i Sharp: GX10, GX10i, GX20, GX30 Nokia: Series 40 (including 6230, 6610) Samsung: D500, E330, E700, E800, E810, E820 Sagem: myv55, myv65, myv75 Sony Ericsson: T610, T630, Z1010, Z600, Z800 Motorola: v500, v505, v525.

Products

Sudoku on your mobile phone

Pappocom puzzles are now available on the majority of mobile phones, courtesy of Teazel Limited.

Visit Teazel.com and pick from four levels of difficulty. Every pack has 10 puzzles guaranteed to keep you busy whenever you have a spare five minutes.

Your answers are checked on the phone so you can see immediately whether you've got the whole puzzle right. If you're desperate, clues are given - but

Products

Go! Sudoku for the Sony PSP

Now you can get your Sudoku fix wherever and whenever you want! With a supply of 1000 Pappocom puzzles, you'll be entertained for ages.

Take to your commute with four main game modes at hand, including three multiplayer modes (Pass mode, Versus mode, and Battle mode) and one single player mode (Solo mode). For those unfamiliar with Sudoku, don't fret. Go! Sudoku comes equipped with a Tutorial mode that teaches beginners the basics of how to complete Sudoku puzzles of all difficulty levels.



Sudoku addict in Beijing

Zhang Yuan, a PhD student at Renmin University, is the founder of www.17shudu.com, the largest sudoku forum in China. She started playing sudoku in February and opened the forum.

"I found sudoku on the Internet. I fell into love with it, because my major is computers and I'm interested in digits," said Zhang, "The players not only just play online in our forum, but also get scores and rankings."

Products

Sudoku board game

Throw away the pencils! Work out your Sudoku solutions on this three-dimensional game board from Briarpatch (USA).

The included puzzle booklet uses the Puzzles by Pappocom that are featured in newspapers worldwide, including the *New York Post* and *London Times*, and preferred by Sudoku aficionados worldwide. Select one of 100 puzzles from the booklet, and place the red number tiles on the game board.

To solve the puzzle, fill in the squares with black number tiles. 81 double-sided number tiles are supplied in a re-useable storage compartment.

Ages seven and up. Available from March 2006.



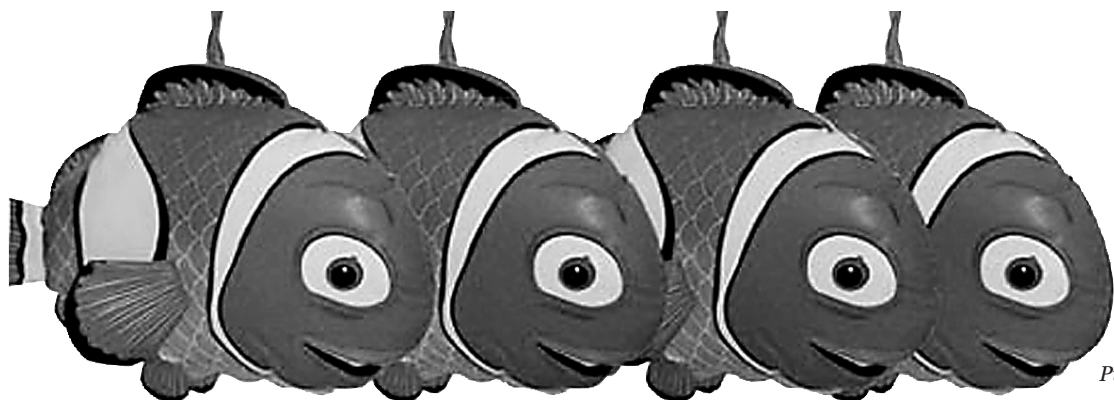
Products

Sudokubo

Designed and manufactured in Italy, Sudokubo is a wooden, three-dimensional Sudoku board. Play without the hassles of pencils and erasers, or just keep it on your desk as an ornament! Comes with a selection of puzzles by Pappocom.



Zhang Yuan recommends a sudoku game. Enjoy challenging your brain!



Punch bag

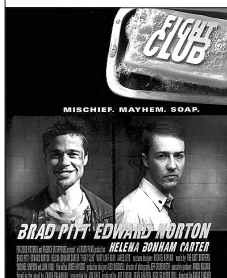
By Gan Tian

Hey, work boy. White collar feeling a little tight? And what's with those gray sacks under your eyes? Even your suit looks like it's developing worry lines. You ought to take the weight off your feet – and I don't mean in your posture-pedic office recliner. Relax, fella. You only live once – even in business.

The business of relaxation



My Teacher



Fight Club



Bone Collector

Scary movies

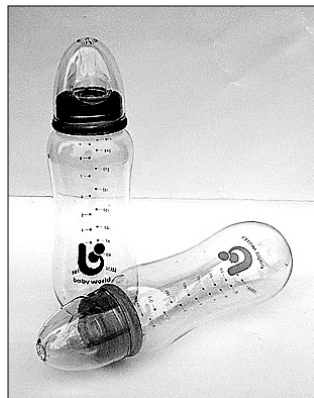
OK, so you worried all day about the big account. But how to get it off your mind at night? Why not worry instead about a zombie coming to eat your face? You doubt me? You think I worry about copy deadlines knowing the Leprechaun could be waiting for me every night? Damn right!

Gan 'Spine Tingling' Tian recommends:

The Bone Collector, My Teacher, Fight Club

Price: 8 yuan

Available: Fantasy Movies DVD Shop, No.244, Chengfulu Road, Wudaokou, Haidian



Milk bottles
– creepy
but cool

Baby

Ahh, the carefree days of childhood. Wouldn't it be great if we could all return to the crib now and again? Not in a creepy Japanese business man in 'those clubs' kind of way. Relaxation needn't mean the unraveling of your basic self respect.

Milk bottle

Many grown-ups are using milk bottles to drink

water when they are thirsty (of course they do it in private, so this is a secret and they won't let you know it), but why don't you give it a try? Actually, this is a bit creepy. Well, you know where to get 'em now, weirdo.

Price: 26 yuan for a plastic one; 47 yuan for glass

Available: Carrefour Supermarket, Zhong-guancun Plaza, Haidian



Adult toy – not THAT kind of toy!

Adult toy

Toys are only for children? Hey, man, you are so OUT! 'Adult' needn't mean 'sleazy backstreet'. We're just talking little fripperies to keep your brain ticking over. What did you think I meant?

Price: 50-70 yuan

Available: Sherry's Home, First Floor, Building 45, Huaqingjiayuan, Wudaokou, Haidian



Boxing-hit stress for six

Punch bag

Just imagine punching your boss in the face...no, don't do it! IMAGINE. But sometimes we want to do MORE than imagine...no, really, don't do it. Get a punch bag and some gloves. And imagine. "That's right, Mr Editor. I'm the Leprechaun..."

Price: 69 yuan each

Boxing gloves: 128 yuan per pair

Available: Sixth Floor, Grand Pacific Shopping Mall, Xidan, Xicheng



Rose Oil. Oil with roses in it.

Balm

Balm is good for health, you know that. It can clean your face, smoothen your skin, darken your hair, and even enlarge your breasts (I mean, girls). What's important, it will refresh your mind when you feel tired after work.

Rose Oil

Oil. With roses in it. Smells nice. Like roses. Lovely. Make worry go away. Mmmm.

Price: 498 yuan

Available: Makunsi, First Floor, New World Shopping Center, Chongwen

Calotine de Grès

Drop three or four drops of it in your tissue or handkerchief, put it under your nose and take a deep breath three times. Then, put the tissue or handkerchief in your collar, bra, sleeves; anywhere close to your body. The balm will evaporate with your body's warmth. Sort of minty fresh.

Price: 379 yuan

Available: Calotine, First Floor, Zhongyou Shopping Center, Xidan, Xicheng



51fashion.com

Minty fresh Calotine de Grès

By Huang Daohen

Living in a foreign country means more than just a change in scenery. A new environment can be exhilarating but take some time to make sure your body is keeping up with your senses.



Get used to life in Beijing

Weather

The weather in Beijing, according to Beijing Meteorological Bureau, is of the continental type, with cold and dry winters, due to the Siberian air masses that move southward across the Mongolian Plateau. The summers are hot owing to warm and humid monsoon winds. January is the coldest month and July is the warmest. Following the wet and hot summer months comes the autumn. Expect a sharp disparity between daytime and nighttime temperatures.

Jet lag

Jetlag affects individuals in different ways and to different degrees. Flying across three or more time zones often disrupts your normal sleep cycle. As a result, your internal body clock wakes you during the night and makes you sleepy during the day. Other symptoms of jetlag include decreased concentration, headaches and diarrhea. These symptoms can be aggravated by stress, lack of sleep and dry air.

There's no single proven method for preventing or curing jet lag. But there are some things you may try:

Before your trip, reset your internal clock. Several days before your trip, gradually adjust your sleep schedule to more closely match the time at your destination.

When you arrive at your destination, reset your watch to local time. If possible, allow yourself a day or two to get used to the time change.

Studying in Beijing

Study abroad gives a unique opportunity to learn about another culture and yourself. Bringing your sense of humor and an open mind along with your passport is a great help during the first few months.

For treatment of simple illnesses, such as colds or flu, go to the university clinic on campus, where you will be charged a small fee for treatment or medicine. For medical needs that go beyond the scope of the university health clinic, you will have access to the Beijing International SOS Clinic and International Medical Center. Both are first-rate western organizations with western pharmacies. You will be expected to pay for your treatment on the spot. Keep all medical bills and receipts so you can make an insurance claim when you go back home.

What if I become ill?

'Hong Kong dog', 'Bali belly', 'Aden gut' – whatever you call it, diarrhea is the most common illness to strike new settlers, especially in the fall of Beijing when the weather is in its transition.

New settlers' diarrhea typically begins abruptly with watery stools, vomiting and low fever. Most doctors recommend taking only clear liquids for the first 24 to 48 hours. Watch for the signs, such as dry mouth and dark-colored urine. Most cases of diarrhea clear up within one to three days without medical treatment, but if you become seriously ill, seek medical attention immediately.

tion immediately.

For other minor injuries or ailments you might come across, pharmacies, found in all streets, can offer help. The staff will usually be able to help if you describe your symptoms. Larger ones sometimes have a separate counter offering diagnoses and advice. Take along a Chinese speaker with you if possible.

If you're interested in being treated with traditional Chinese medicine, many hospitals and medical colleges have attached traditional institutes, while some hotels have their own massage or acupuncture services

What precautions should I take?

Basic precautions, such as drinking bottled water or using insect repellent, can prevent some illnesses, like diarrhea.

Avoid flavored ices or iced drinks. If you buy fruit and vegetables from the markets, peel them or scrub them with soap and water. During your stay, you should drink plenty of fluids since Beijing is quite dry year round.

Don't eat raw vegetables, raw fruit (unless you peel them yourself), or raw or undercooked meat and seafood. Although sometimes tempting, avoid food or drink from street vendors.

Stay indoors during the hottest time of the day and use sunscreen when outdoors to prevent an uncomfortable sunburn and life-threatening heatstroke.

Useful addresses of health facilities:

1) Beijing International (SOS) Clinic

Where: Building C, BITIC Leasing Center, No 1 North Road, Xing Fu San Cun, Chaoyang

Open: Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm

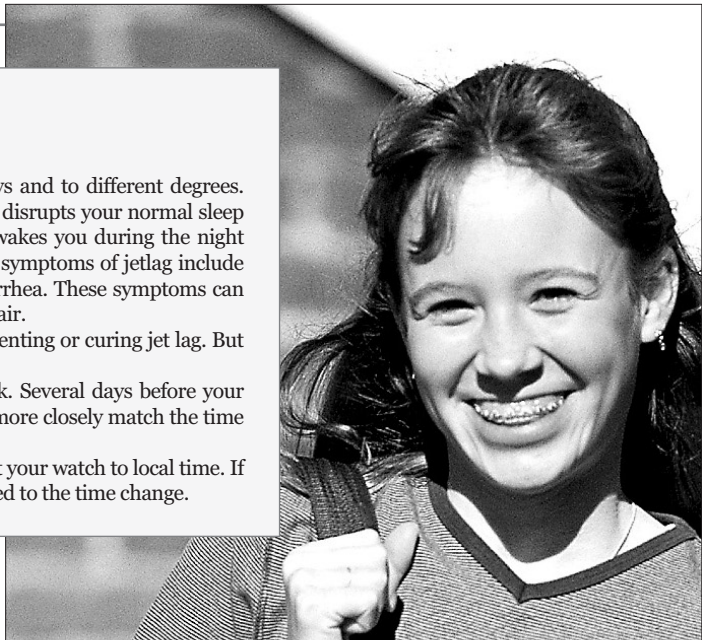
Saturday, from 9am to 6pm

Clinic Tel: 6462 9112

2) International Medical Center

Where: Beijing Lufthansa Center, Room S106-S111, Office Building, No. 50, Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang

Tel: 64651561/2/3



By David Drakeford
What is eco-tourism?

Eco-tourism is ecological tourism, that is, a form of the industry that seeks to reduce the detrimental effects of human interaction with the environment. Although natural beauty and wildlife are always at the center of eco-tourism, conservation and responsibility towards the local people and economy plus long-term sustainability should also be included for it to be considered successful. If being environmentally aware at home is important to you then you should be doubly careful when visiting a scenic spot which may be as fragile as it is beautiful.

Is eco-tourism important in China?

The World Tourism Organization predicts that China will become the principle tourist destination in the world by 2020. Attractive scenery, wildlife and a pleas-

ant environment are all important in attracting tourists but their very presence can have a negative impact on the environment. Some destinations can attract huge numbers of visitors, for instance areas that have long been considered particularly scenic such as Guilin in Guangxi Province or locations that have featured in big budget movies. Sichuan Province's Jiuzhaigou has been brought into the spotlight through movies such as Zhang Yimou's *Hero* but also for its troubled wildlife which has suffered greatly from a large number of visiting tourists. The negative impacts of uncontrolled development often include unrestrained private transport, loss of wildlife, and human exodus from rural areas.

If natural resources are assigned appropriate tourist areas such as nature reserves, with the income generated being channeled back into management and protection, then development can be seen as a positive force for the environment, the local economy and the enjoyment of tourists.

The grass can be greener: eco-tourism in China

Wenhai Ec lodge, Yunnan

Named as one of the world's ten best ecolodges by *Outside* magazine, Wenhai Ec lodge is owned by a village cooperative of 56 families who bought and renovated a Naxi minority courtyard house and now work on site.

The extreme and enticing topography of Yunnan has been created by Asia's three great rivers, the Yangtze, Lancang and Salween carving their way through five immense mountain ranges. This unique environment makes for some diverse and fragile wildlife including black-necked cranes and Asiatic black bears.

Lying in a valley at a height of 10,000 feet the lodge can only be reached by horse or hiking in on foot, but arrival leads to a rewarding view of the Jade Dragon Mountains. The upper slopes of these snow-covered peaks, which rise over 18,000 feet, can be reached by further trekking as can some remote Yi minority villages and Wenhai Lake. A longer three-day hike to Tiger Leaping Gorge can be taken by hardy trekkers.

Fitted out with solar panels, a system that converts manure into gas, water purifiers and a greenhouse the lodge is proud of its eco-credentials and enables neighboring villages. Ten percent of profits go to a conservation and community development.

A small library with information on Wenhai's culture and natural history is available and traditional 'country-style' Naxi dishes are served to vegetarians and carnivores alike.

Around 300 yuan a night including meals and guides

Tel: 13908881817 (English)

www.northwestyunnan.com/contactwenhai.htm



The Jade Dragon Mountains in distance from Wenhai Lake.



Yulong Xueshan (Jade Dragon Mountains)

Nanling Park, Guangdong



Nanling's famous Peacock waterfall

Nanling National Forest Park is on the border between Guangdong and Hunan province, an area of 273 square kilometers. It is located in the Yao Autonomous County of Ruyuan in northern Guangdong, 285 kilometers from Guangzhou city.

There are four major scenic spots in Nanling: Xiao Huangshan, the waterfalls, Qinshui valley and Guangdong peak.

Xiao Huangshan is the largest stretch of ancient forest in Guangdong, prized as a winter scenic spot for its panoply of colored leaves that range from deep red to amber against the mountain scenery. Guangdong pine, a state-protected plant, has leaves which can even appear blue in certain conditions.

The biggest waterfalls in Guangdong are here numbering around 200, some single and some in formation including the

famous Peacock Waterfalls.

Guangdong Peak, or the First Peak, is 1902 meters tall, a popular spot to view the setting or rising sun. The scenery is different and unique in each season.

Qinshui Valley has many views to be taken in, including a remote gorge, and peaceful green pools bordered by cliff walls worn smooth as glass by the rushing water.

Nanling Zhongheng Eco-tourism Development Co. was established formally on September 2004. The three objectives for their eco-tourism project are: promoting natural protection, improving community development and sustainable development.

Accommodation:

Orange House

Twin room: 398 yuan per day

Tel: 0751-523 2929

www.eco-nanling.com

Sanxingdui Heritage Site Museum, Sichuan

Situated in the northeast of the state-protected Sanxingdui site by the bank of the Yazi River in Guanghan – a city famed for its long history and culture, Sanxingdui Museum is 40 km to the north of Chengdu and combines cultural relics, academic research, scientific education and leisure.

The eerie, otherworldly stone faces discovered at the Shangxingdui and nearby Jinsha excavation sites now symbolize the legendary Shu dynasty and one of China's most important burial sites.

Popular history has always held that Chinese civilization originated around the Yellow River during the Xia and Shang dynasties but digs at these two locations



The molded bronze statues discovered in Sanxingdui

have confirmed that Chinese civilization has multiple origins. By all indications Shangxingdui was a bustling trade center and capital of Shu dynasty.

The museum is one of the first museums in China certified by Green Globe as a site of eco-tourism.

Tel: 0838-550 0349

www.sxd.cn



All in white, it's like a fairyland made of cotton, sugar, snow or clouds. It's Pamukkale (Cotton Castle), approximately 20 kilometers from Denizli, the province in west Anatolia in Turkey.

Founded in 190 BC, the town used to be ancient Rome's thermal

bath center in the second and third centuries for its plentiful natural springs. Nowadays, the white world is accessible by air from all over the world. With pure white views, hot springs and mysterious cultural sites left by the Romans, a nirvana of antiquity awaits the traveler.

Pamukkale: a pure white wonderland

Cotton Castle

Pamukkale means Cotton Castle in Turkish, acknowledging the natural beauty of the landscape. The 'cotton' is actually the dazzling white calcareous castles formed by limestone-laden thermal springs, creating unbelievable stalactites, potholes and cataracts.

For thousands of years, a deep underground spring has been pouring out streams of hot, mineral-saturated water. As it has flowed down the mountainside the steaming water has hollowed enormous circular basins in the earth, and the water's rich mineral content has coated them in a smooth layer of dazzling white calcareous rock.

Romans used these mineral rich, hot volcanic spring waters as a natural spa for their therapeutic powers. They built the grand city of Hierapolis near the natural hot springs, which attracted a steady stream of pilgrims coming to bathe in the curative waters.

In my eyes...

"The stalactites are as white as snow and completely surround you. Water is constantly flowing from higher altitudes filling the many pools. Visitors must be barefoot when walking in the area to minimize damage to the stalactites. However, many areas are so heavily trodden that the soft stalactites have become very rocky. It was quite painful walking over those areas and was not unlike a terrible foot massage revealing problems with my sinuses and digestion. At one point, I discretely slipped on my slippers to walk over the rocky parts but in no more than two seconds, a guard from afar screamed 'Monsieur! No shoes!'"

"Turkish tourists often like to pose for pictures in dramatic poses. At Pamukkale, it looked like the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit edition was doing a photo tryout session. Almost everywhere you looked were women in bikinis posing dramatically against the white stalactites as friends or husbands took photos."

"Despite the beauty of the area, I can only imagine how much more beautiful it was only 15 years ago. The rises of tourism and pollution have caused a lot of damage. I won't be surprised if



Photos provided by the Turkish Embassy in Beijing

Useful information:

Hot spring in Cotton Castle

The mineral-rich Pamukkale hot spring waters are rich in calcium, magnesium sulfate and bicarbonate. They also contain carbon dioxide. Water temperature is 36 to 38 degree centigrade with a pH of 6. Total mineral content is 2,430 mg per liter. The waters are used both for drinking and bathing. They are recommended for the treatment of rheumatic, dermatological and gynecological diseases, neuro-

logical and physical exhaustion, digestive maladies and nutritional disorders.

How to get to Pamukkale

Depart from Denizli, where frequent mini-buses are serving the town of Pamukkale. Get to Denizli via Istanbul, the largest city in northwest Turkey.

Ataturk International Airport in Istanbul is the biggest in Turkey. There are scheduled flights from all over the world. The best and biggest airline in Turkey is Turkish Airlines (THY).

in another 15 years, there will be nothing left to see in Pamukkale."

— From Jonathan Jason Wong's blog at TravelPod

"Clambering gratefully out, we [her friend Hubbie] walked around the natural calcium springs slightly bemused about where they were. We were up high on a large cliff, and in this comparatively tiny place, the spring had bubbled its way out and flowed into streams that gathered and crystallized into large pools, before moving on and repeating the process. They cascade their way down the cliff in this fashion, creating the saucers and containing the pale gray mud that reputedly holds healing powers."

"The structures are referred to as Travertine (a porous rock consisting of calcium carbonate, used in building) and they are extremely inviting, as the mud is warm, but incredibly slippery."

"Stripping off for a quick sunbathe, it was very peaceful and a bit weird, but the view was amazing. Miles of flat scenery, surrounded by more mountains. I understood the word, 'expansive' at that point. We were traveling out of season, and so there weren't many people to disturb us, but at high season I could imagine it would be very busy and probably not as enjoyable."

"The food from the local rest stop was okay, not brilliant, but we were in the middle of nowhere so there wasn't too much choice. The people were very friendly, and enjoyed being filmed on the camera. I was baking hot, but most were decked out in suits and looking dustily respectable, and had huge smiles."

— Salgir's review of Pamukkale from dooyoo.co.uk

Hierapolis

Hierapolis has extensive ruins: see the city walls, the octagonal Martyrium of St. Philip, the second century theater, the Temple of Apollo, the basilica, then the necropolis which covers two square kilometers and contains some of the best examples of tomb styles; it is one of the best-preserved ancient cemeteries in all of Anatolia.

The East Bath now is an archaeology museum housing many of the remains from Hierapolis.

(By Jackie Zhang)

By Han Manman

As the first life insurance joint venture company to set up its headquarters in Beijing, Skandia-BSAM Life Insurance was established by Skandia Insurance company, an international financial service and insurance group, and Beijing State-owned Assets Management Company (BSAM) in 2004, each with a 50 percent share. The company is focused on long-term savings and investment solu-

tions for Chinese clients.

"These three interns all have something in common. Firstly, their resumes are all very good - they all went to good universities, did very well at school and took part in a lot of campus activities. They also performed very well at the interview stage and showed logical thinking as well as an ability to analyze problems. They are all also sincere, confident, good team players who have clear self-develop-

ment goals.

Skandia-BSAM only takes the most talented graduates. We look for someone with professional knowledge, development potential, a passion for finance and the insurance market, a sincere work attitude, creativity and a good sense of responsibility.

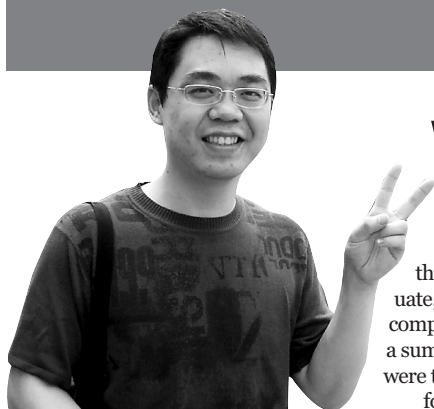
We pay particular attention to exam grades and the applicant's experience. We don't think it is important if he or she has done

some irrelevant work, like a part-time job at McDonalds.

This year we are launching a two-year elite graduate training program. Our plan is to recruit graduates from Beijing, Shanghai and Jiangsu. Skandia-BSAM will provide them with a two-year training service including work training; studying in different company positions; a tutorship and so on to help the students understand the company culture, concepts of

management, business flow and professional skills quickly. The best graduates will be sent to Skandia's headquarters in Sweden."

—Lu Tongyun, HR & Office
Admin Director of Skandia-BSAM



Ferry He got a Master's degree from Peking University, majoring in financial mathematics. He started his internship in July 2004 and got a full-time job in Skandia-BSAM's actuarial department in February 2005.

Before going into my third year as a postgraduate, I decided to choose a company in which to have a summer internship. There were three basic requirements for me at the time: the company should be an insurance company in Beijing, it should be a foreign-invested company or a joint venture, so I could learn more from the work than in a state-owned company.

Based on these three requirements, I looked for suitable companies online and found two. Skandia-BSAM was one of them. I applied for Skandia-BSAM online. After a few weeks I still hadn't got a reply so I called the company's HR department and was told that

they were looking for a full-time employee rather than an intern. I didn't want to give up, so I said I could do the work as a full-time employee in my third year as a postgraduate. The company HR department finally gave me an interview.

It was the first time in my life that I had done a formal interview. Dressed in a business suit, I felt a little nervous. The first round was the HR interview. They asked me a lot of questions based on my resume, like my internship experience, campus activities I have participated in and the projects I've done. I noticed that they always paid attention to details. From my answers, they always siezed on a small point and asked me more details. The first interview passed smoothly. A few days later,

I did the second interview with our department manager and our Chief Financial Officer (CFO), in English. I was a little bit afraid that I would be asked questions I didn't understand, but luckily the CFO was very nice and didn't ask me any hard questions.

Doing actuarial work requires a very, very careful mind. We can't make mistakes because if we do it will have huge ramifications. No matter what we do, we have to check, double check and check again.

On my first day I was given one of our insurance products and asked what it was all about. I decided to compare it with other insurance companies' products. I compared the different points of the products from different companies and did a long and

systematic report using Excel and PowerPoint. When doing the report, I found lots of problems and asked our marketing expert and CFO. I remembered the CFO praised me after seeing my report and said I was doing a good job, which gave me a great sense of achievement.

After several months' internship at the company, I really wanted to work there. Working for a partly European company is a very different experience, and the management is not very rigorous. The whole company environment made me feel very comfortable. I had done an internship before but no one gave me any work and I didn't know what to do. Here, I would be given work as it came along - I felt like a regular employee not just a student with nothing to do.



Pan Yi got a Master's degree from Peking University, majoring in economics. She started her internship in August 2005 and got a full-time job offer to work in Skandia-BSAM's investment research department in June this year.

I did an internship at a well-known bank when I was an undergraduate, but they gave me very little to do. Sometimes I just sat there all day doing nothing. I was hoping to stay at the bank when I started the internship, but the longer I stayed, the more boring I found it. I told myself I couldn't work there, I didn't want to do the same thing day after day.

My interview at Skandia-BSAM wasn't like Ferry and Sasa's interviews. My department manager was more interested in my personality and asked me questions about my character.

Lots of people say I'm an easy-going girl, but also obstinate one. If I think my idea and investment theory is good, I will insist on it and try to carry it out. In the investment industry this is an important trait.

Work at the investment research department requires very logical thinking. When helping customers to choose funds to construct an investment portfolio, you need to identify the characteristics of each fund and combine their advantages.

We always contact fund company managers to buy funds for our portfolio. Before communicating with them, we need to do a lot of preparation. I have to

do various analyses for the fund we choose. Fund managers could easily deceive you they thought you weren't professional or an investment expert. I still need to communicate with fund company managers together with our senior investment expert and, through listening to the questions they ask, have learnt more and more about how to do it. I will soon be able to do it on my own.

I am a logical person, anything I am asked to do, I will ask why. When I hold a different opinion to my boss, we will see who is more logical and who can persuade the other. My boss is very kind, and never forces me to accept his idea because he is the boss and has

more experience than me. Most of the time, I accept my boss's ideas. However, he must have a good reason, if not, I won't change my mind, I'm very stubborn.

My advice to students would be, never think that what you learned at school was useless. For example, I learnt all about investment theory at school and when I started work the theory I learnt gave me have a deeper understanding about the investment industry. Also, sometimes inexperienced students have more advantages than the people who have worked for many years. Graduates are like blank pieces of paper, they are willing to try new things.



Li Sasa got a Master's degree in finance from Leicester University in the UK. She started doing an internship between September 2003 and August 2004 and got a full-time offer to work at the accounts department in August.

I had already received the offer from Leicester University when I graduated. As I had a year before going to Britain, I decided to do a one-year internship at a company. At the time, Skandia-BSAM was still in the early stages of setting up and urgently needed employees. My internship examination was a one and a half hour written exam. The topics were varied and included things like, what would you do for the company culture and what are your strong points. The interview was

in English and was more about professional accountancy knowledge. I remember the interviewer asked me why they should take me on when I had just graduated and had no work experience I said they should take me on because of my enthusiasm for the work. I explained that I was a blank piece of paper and the company was also new, so hopefully we could grow together.

My character changed gradually as my time at the company passed. I was a careless girl before, and when I came to the company, I found that everyone was very careful. Even if I made

a mistake, no one blamed me but I felt bad that I had caused problems for my colleagues. If you make a mistake, the results can affect lots of people's work.

Another thing that impressed me a lot was the working atmosphere at the company. A European company is more like a big family, which, when it encounters problems, discusses them together. The CFO also regularly invites us to have lunch with him. You feel that everyone is equal and very open-minded.

One year on and it was time for me to go to Britain to study. Before I left, the company tried to

convince me to stay. I thought that the chance to go abroad to study was too great an opportunity to be missed so I stuck to my plans and went to Britain. We kept in close contact over MSN and I felt I was a member of a family and that nothing would change. I sent lots of pictures to my colleagues and chatted with them online. When some of my colleagues had business trips to Britain, they stopped by to visit me. Just a few weeks after I finished my Masters I got a telephone call from the company asking if I wanted to come back to the company and so of course I said yes!

Follow Beijing Today

This column is open to those who want to improve their English but lack foreign specialized help. We will review the English articles you send to Shirley_chen@ynet.com. Suggestions will be given on how to improve the Chinglish sentences in your articles. All interesting stories are welcomed. Please be sure the article is written in English, around 500 words in total. Please do not forget to include your name and address.

My Attitude towards firecrackers



Liu Ting is a student of North China Teachers University of Mining Engineering.

By Liu Ting

When it comes to the topical discussion about whether firecrackers should be banned or not in the city, the ideas are divergent. Say, some people maintain that setting off firecrackers is a traditional way of celebrating festivals and it should be kept. While a substantial number of people object, insisting that it should be for-

bidden. As for my opinion on this subject, I think firecrackers is supposed to be kept on condition that it would be under the direction of the government as well as people be cautious when setting it off.

First and foremost, no one can deny that as a traditional way of celebrating festivals, firecracker plays an indefensible part in adding to the

attraction of the festivals, which is able to create joyous effect and induce amusement. At the same time, it exerts a significant role in spreading and promoting traditional culture. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that environment problems emerge simultaneously, in some extent, menace people's health. It is true, on the other hand, people who

are not careful will end up with being wounded seriously when setting off firecrackers.

All things considered, as long as setting off firecrackers can be directed by the government, namely, confined at a certain place and certain time, meanwhile, people can be conscientious, there is no doubt that it is a laudable way to celebrate festivals.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify chinglish in public areas. If you see any chinglish signs, please take a picture and send them to Shirley_chen@ynet.com with your name and address.

西洋楼遗址区
The European
Palaces Ruins
Area
圆明园盛时全景模型展
Yuanmingyuan Golden Time
Panorama Model Exhibition

Photo by Liu Fang

European palaces blamed for urban decay

By Shawn O'vawldignity
The European Palaces Ruins Area.

This sounds more like a newspaper headline than a place. Or the ramblings of some old curmudgeon – "It wasn't like this in my day...now there's these European palaces everywhere...they just lower the tone." Anyway, as a place name, it's descriptive but the English is a little sloppy. 'The European Palaces Ruin Area' would fix that problem, but it's still open to misinterpretation (as I misinterpreted it). Perhaps 'The Ruins of European Palaces' is better. The word 'area' is redundant and should be ejected.



Photo by Li Yan

Near enough?

By Shawn O'vawldignity
No Nearing.

'Nearing' is a word commonly heard in English to denote arriving at a place. 'We neared the football pitch', or 'As we were nearing the train station'. But we don't use it in the context of a warning sign. For a start, it lacks the urgency of a direct warning. 'Keep Your Distance' would be better, or as the sign is small, just the simple word 'Danger'. The sign makers should bear in mind that language considerations aside, the picture should tell most of the story. The sign that always kept me at a safe distance when I was young was 'Danger of Death'. That sounded even worse than 'Danger of Your Dad Shouting at You'.



Michael Magid replies

Firstly, I would like to commend you on your choice of topic! The use of firecrackers in China is certainly a controversial topic that has garnered much attention in the past few years. You express yourself quite clearly and directly. I like that you get right to the point. Please allow me to give you a few pointers so that you can make this article even better. In the first sentence, I would write 'whether or not' together in the following way: When it comes to the topical discussion about whether or not firecrackers should be banned in the city, the ideas diverge. I would just change the order of some of the words in the second sentence and combine it with the third sentence with the linking word, whereas: 'Some people

say that setting off firecrackers is a traditional way of celebrating festivals and should be maintained, whereas a substantial number of people object, insisting that it should be forbidden.' In the last sentence of the first paragraph, pay attention to subject verb agreement. Since the word 'firecrackers' is plural the verbs and pronouns that refer to it should also be plural. You could write, 'As for my opinion on this subject, I think firecrackers should be kept on condition that they would be under the direction of the government. Also, people should be careful when setting them off.'

Let's talk about the second paragraph. We usually talk about firecrackers, not firecracker, so I would add an 's'

to the end of that word. Then, the verb 'play' would need to be changed as well in this way: '... firecrackers play an indefensible role in adding to the attraction of the festivals and are able to create a joyous effect and induce amusement.' The word 'environment' is a noun and should be changed into the adjective 'environmental' since it is describing the noun 'problems'. I would write, 'Nevertheless, it must be admitted that environmental problems emerge simultaneously, to some extent menacing people's health.' Although it is not wrong to write 'on the other hand' in the middle of the sentence, it sounds better if you put this phrase at the beginning of the sentence like this: 'On the other hand, it is true that people who are not careful will end up

being wounded seriously when setting off firecrackers.'

As for the last paragraph, it's almost perfect! I would just separate the sentence into two sentences because it is a bit long. What you get if you do this would be: 'All things considered, as long as setting off firecrackers can be directed by the government, namely, confined to a certain place and time, it would be a laudable way to celebrate festivals. It is important to keep in mind that the people who set off firecrackers should be conscientious.' I must say that I am very impressed by your knowledge of rich vocabulary. You should be proud of your English! Keep up the excellent work!

(Michael Magid is a teacher at New Channel school.)

Friday, September 22

Exhibition Zang Boliang Solo Exhibition



Where: Beijing Central Art Gallery & Cultural Venue, Riverville Square, No 1 District One, Tianzhu, Shunyi
When: Daily 10am-10pm, until September 29
Admission: Free
Tel: 6450 8483, 6450 8646

Li Furong Solo Exhibition



Where: Yimeicang Gallery, No 837 Kangyingcun, Sunhexiang, Jingshun Lu, Chaoyang
When: Daily 9am-6pm, until September 25
Admission: Free
Tel: 8456 8415

Movie

The 400 Blows

Misunderstood at home by his parents and tormented in school by his insensitive teacher, Antoine frequently runs away from both places. Finally, 12-year-old Antoine descends into a life of crime along with his friend Rene... It is a landmark in modern cinema, turning Francois Truffaut from a critic into one of the world's most distinguished filmmakers.

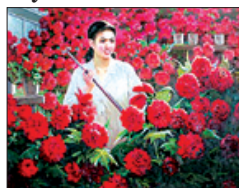
Where: French Culture Center, 18 Guangcai International Apartment, West Road of Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang

When: 6pm, until September 27
Admission: 10-20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627



Sunday, September 24

Exhibition Oil Painting Portrait Exhibition by North Korean Artists



Where: Pyongyang Art Studio, Room 43, Red House Hotel, Chunxiu Lu, No 10 Taipingzhuang, Dongzhimenwai, Chaoyang
When: Daily 10am-8pm, until October 30
Admission: Free
Tel: 6416 7500, 6416 7544

Beijing's Yesterday - Zhuxian-min Photography Exhibition

Where: 798 Photo Gallery, Dashanzi Art District, No 4



Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
When: Daily 10am-6pm, until October 5
Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 1784, 6437 5284



Lu Hao Solo Exhibition
Where: Xin Dong Cheng

Space II, Liquor Factory Art District, Beihuqu Jie, Anwai-beiyuan, Changping

When: Daily 10am-5pm, until October 31
Admission: Free
Tel: 5202 3868

Outdoor Hands-on: Chinese Tie-Dye

Learn two fabric craftsmanship with the Chinese Culture Club: tie-dye (*zha ran*) and batik (*la ran*), which represent typical minority Chinese folk art: simple color and texture, and unique patterns. In this class, you will learn how to do tie-dye by boiling fabric in the wok. All materials are provided.

When: 2:30pm-4:30pm
Cost: 120 yuan
Tel: 6432 9341, 6432 1041

Saturday, September 23

Exhibition Zhang Zhaohui Solo Exhibition

Where: Fa Fa Gallery, No 1 Xiangjiang Beilu, Jingshun Lu, Chaoyang
When: Daily 10:30am-8pm, until September 27
Admission: Free
Tel: 8430 2587, 13001908730



Li Li Solo Exhibition

A humorous and lively example of brushwork - an exhibit of new paintings in the contemporary Chinese style.

Where: Qin Gallery, Enjoy Paradise, 1-1E Hua Wei Li (North of Beijing Curio City), Chaoyang
When: Daily 9:30am-7pm, until September 30
Admission: Free
Tel: 8779 0461, 8779 0458

Movie The Contract



A university student has to persuade a prostitute to pretend to be his fiancée to meet his parents in the countryside. It's about conflicts between traditional and modern life.

Where: Hart Center of Arts,

Dashanzi Art District, No 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
When: 7pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6435 3570

Music

Joyside and The Scoff

The two bands bring rock and roll to Haidian.
Where: D-22, No 13 Chengfu Lu, Haidian
When: 10pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6265 3177

Outdoor Overnight excursion: Underwater Great Wall & Castle

A journey to the Green Mountain Pass and nearby Underwater Great Wall, four hours drive from Beijing. The two sections of the wall, in Hebei, are still relatively unknown to both locals and foreigners and so remain unspoiled. The trip includes an overnight stay at an authentic village courtyard in the castle.

When:
Meet at the Chinese Culture Club (CCC) at 8am Saturday.
Cost: 1200 yuan
Tel: 6432 9341, 6432 1041



Stage in October

Dance

Russian Cossack State Dance Company's debut in Beijing

Who: Russian Cossack State Dance Company
Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, No 135 Xizhimen Wai Street, Xicheng
When: 7:30pm, October 1-2

Opera

Cosi fan tutte, Opera Buffa in Two Acts

Who: Piccolo Teatro di Milano
Where: Poly Theatre, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street,

Chaoyang

When: 7:30pm, October 8-9

Nose, Opera in Three Acts

Who: Century Theater
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street, Chaoyang

When: 7:30pm, October 13

La Traviata, Opera in Three Acts

Who: Teatro la Fenice
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street, Chaoyang
When: 7:30pm, October 29

Music

Grand opening of the 9th Beijing Music Festival

Who: Mariinsky Orchestra with Valery Gergiev
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street, Chaoyang
When: 7:30pm, October 2-3

Maurizio Pollini Piano Recital

Who: Famous Italian Pianist Maurizio Pollini
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street,

Chaoyang

When: 7:30pm, October 4

A Night of Russian Music

Who: China Philharmonic Orchestra
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, Inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng
When: 7:30pm, October 6

Dmitri Shostakovich Song Cycle

Who: Dmitri Shostakovich
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, No 1 Beixinhua Jie, Xicheng
When: 7:30pm, October 10

Paul Badura-Skoda Recital

Who: Paul Badura-Skoda
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen South Street, Chaoyang
When: 7:30pm, October 15

BBC Symphony Orchestra Concert

Who: BBC Symphony Orchestra
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, Inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng
When: 7:30pm, October 24-25

(By Qiu Jiaoning)